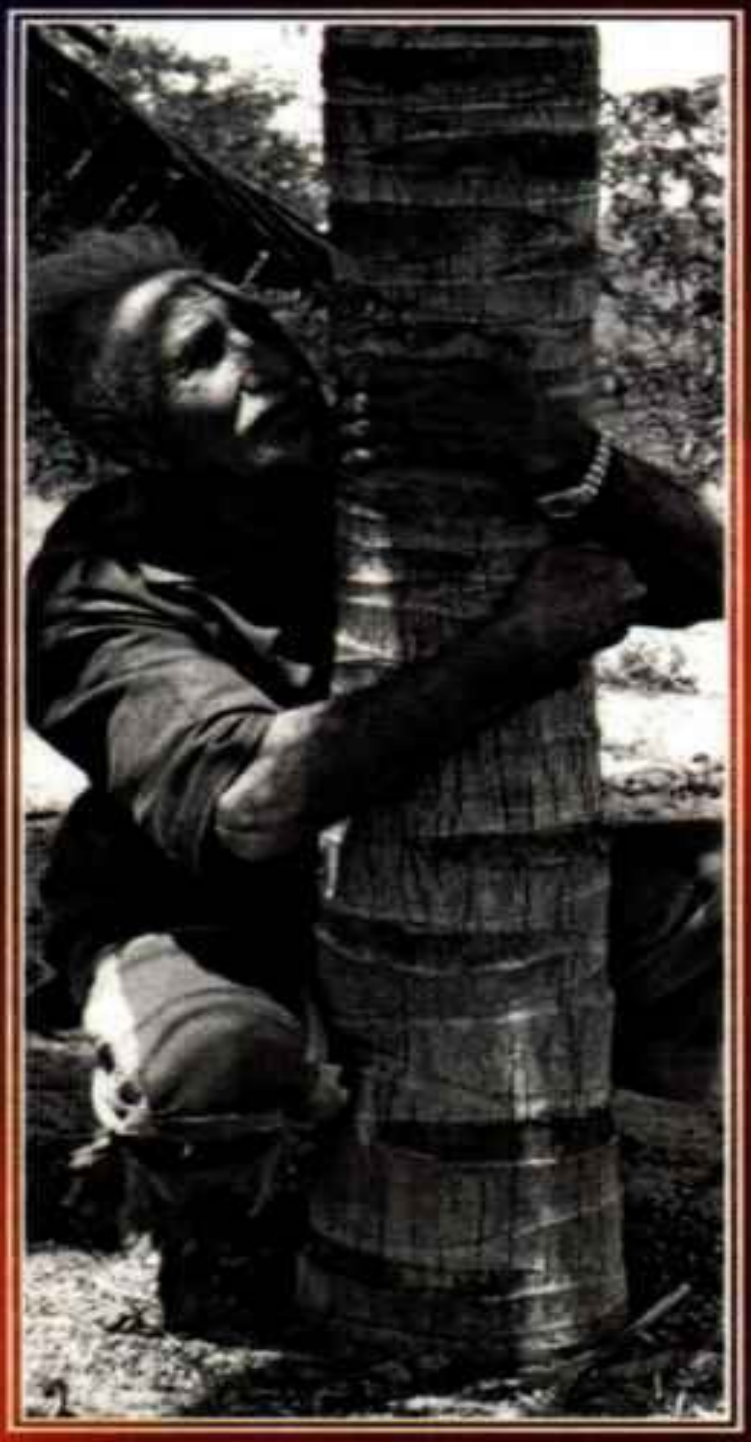
UFO Danger Zone



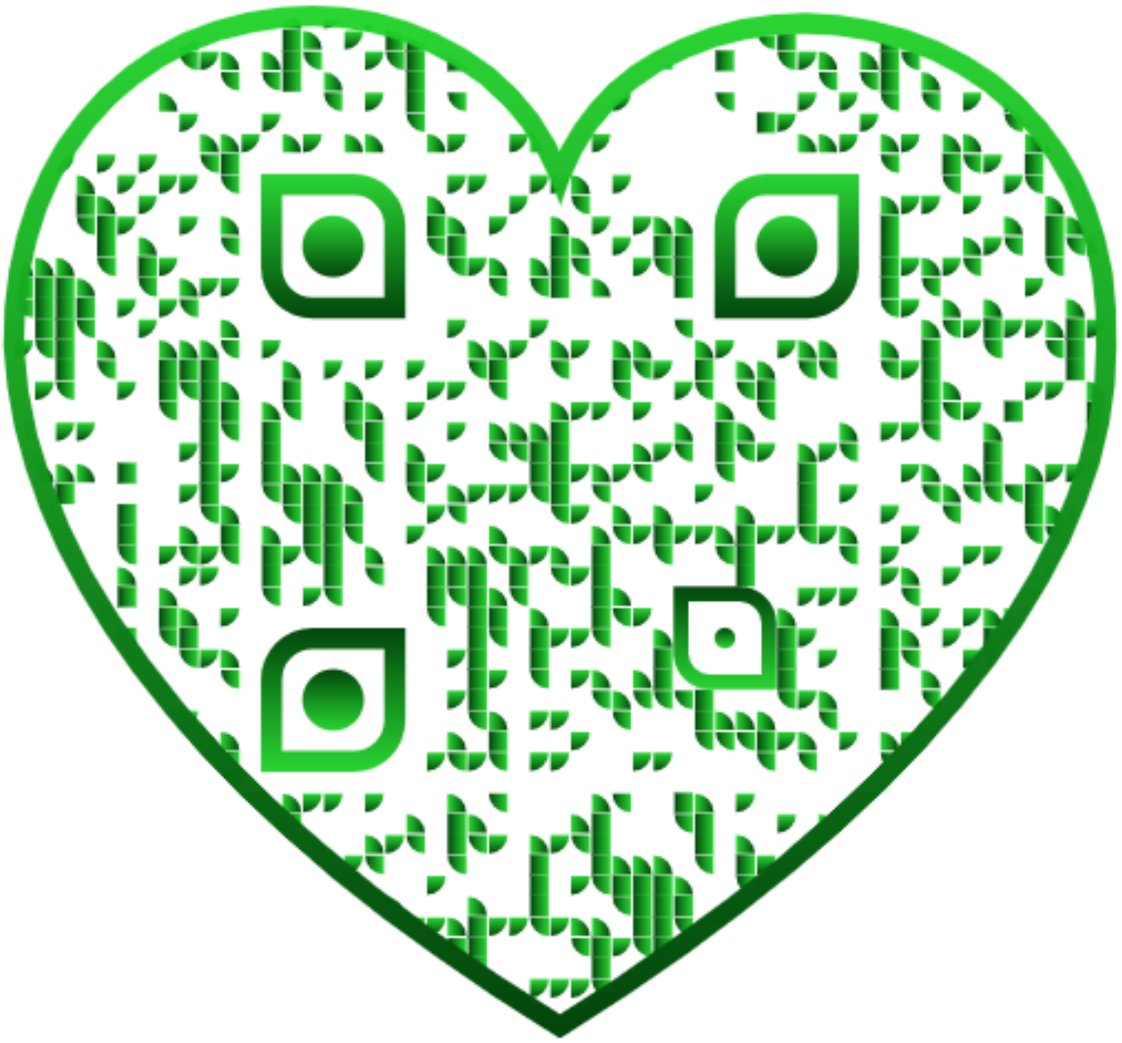
Terror and Death in Brazil — Where Next?

BY

Bob Pratt

With Foreword by

Dr. Jacques Vallee



UFO DANGER ZONE

Terror and Death in Brazil—Where Next?

By Bob Pratt

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Cover design by Bob Pratt. Photos: Left, Januncio De Souza re-enacts encounter when he resisted UFO abduction by clinging to a tree. Right, Firmino Souza in a coma in hospital after Crab Island incident.

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To Faith and Cynthia

Acknowledgments

None of my research in Brazil would have been possible without the help of many of the excellent investigators who live there. All have been generous to a fault, freely sharing

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their time and information, often taking me to the places where encounters happened and introducing me to the people who had those experiences.

Foremost among these researchers is Irene Granchi of Rio de Janeiro. She was my first contact in Brazil, and over the years she informed me of numerous UFO happenings. Directly or indirectly, she put me in touch with nearly all the other people I've worked with in Brazil.

Cynthia Luce has also been invaluable to my research. Cynthia is an American who's lived in Brazil since the 1970s. She has joined me on several field trips, making many of the arrangements, procuring maps and other supplies, interpreting, sharing the driving and enduring the hardships and sometimes limited facilities in the interior.

I am especially grateful to my wife, Faith, who is my best friend and toughest critic. She has been very supportive of my research through the years and has been enormously helpful in reviewing and critiquing every line in this book.

I am also deeply indebted to several UFO investigators who have given up a great deal of their time to help me. Among them are Hulvio Aleixo, Jose Jean Alencar, Reginaldo Athayde, Alberto Do Carmo, Rogerio Freitas and Daniel Rebisso.

Many other UFO investigators have also been very helpful, especially Vitorio Pacaccini, Ubirajara Rodrigues, Thynam Salmeito de Melo, Helio Loyola, Sales Pagannini da Silva, Jackson Felix Pereira, Elianildo de Silva Nascimento, Ricardo Lima e Silva, Alberto Rodriques de Quiera, Monoel de Freitas, Lourinaldo Souza Queiroz, Ronaldo Rodriques de Farias, Romero Chaves, Marcio Miranda Furtado and Pablo Ramires Sales Mascimento.

Some individuals who are not investigators but who took time to help in my research include Pedro Alves, Dr. Auxiliadora da Silva Maia, Jose Marcelo Pereira, Maria

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Conceicao Pontes, Alberto Ferreira da Silva and Jose Humberto dos Santos.

I also wish to salute three people who I first met as interpreters and who became dear friends: Monica Carneiro, Ana Britto Luna and Angela Hadade.

Finally, I am most grateful to all the Brazilian men, women and children who have shared their UFO experiences with me. They are true heroes.

Foreword

The book you are about to read is an exceptional account of adventure, a description of a true mystery. But it should also be read as something else: a wake-up call to scientists who are seriously interested in expanding the frontiers of our knowledge.

The person who goes into a bookstore in search of information about the UFO phenomenon is confronted with entire shelves proposing a bewildering series of volumes claiming to solve the enigma. Some offer arguments to support the idea that we are being visited by an advanced civilization from outer space; others take the opposite view, claiming that all the witnesses have been fooled by mirages and hallucinations, or by yet unrecognized aberrations of the mind. And every theory in between has its advocates and its detractors who often launch violent accusations against one another.

Opinions about UFOs are as varied and confusing as the phenomenon itself. Out of that confusion emerges this remarkable observation: These books offer a lot of speculation but few hard facts. They come from writers who analyze and compare accounts of sightings they have read in other books. They quote each other, often without proper attribution, without citing the source. They propagate old stories even when they are known to be false, and they

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speculate endlessly about possible causes and probable effects.

The few books that make a real contribution in terms of original material, coming from an author who has actually gone into the field and spoken first-hand to the witnesses in their own environment, are very hard to find. The present volume makes such a contribution. For that reason, it stands far above most other volumes on that crowded bookstore shelf.

Bob Pratt's book is unique in describing the experience of decades of very difficult field work by a skilled investigator who is equipped with excellent knowledge of the phenomenon, yet has no preconceived notion about the origin or nature of the sightings he is collecting.

Mr. Pratt has gone repeatedly to Brazil, a country he knows well, in search of hard data about the effects of UFOs on people. He makes no secret of the fact that his first visits there were performed while he worked for a well- known American tabloid. He was so intrigued by what he saw that he later went back on his own. This book represents a lucid compilation of the best documented and most puzzling of his cases. It must have been quite a challenge for him to select the accounts he is describing here out of the thousands of interesting observations he brought back from his many trips to that country-one of the richest reservoirs of UFO data in the world. In every case we follow him as he carefully explains how he contacted the witnesses, what their environment was, the circumstances of their experience and the impact it made on them, on their family, on the social environment around them.

This is field research as it should be done, and we can only deplore the fact that his work has not been repeated in other parts of the world. Perhaps Mr. Pratt's book will inspire others to launch similar efforts in their own countries, to help convince skeptical scientists that the UFO phenomenon is

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indeed an important, robust, significant, new fact in our physical and social environment, one that deserves serious study rather than superficial rejection.

What picture emerges from this compilation of Brazilian encounters, recounted here in the easy-going but precise style of an experienced, American journalist? To me, the first impression was a confirmation that the phenomenon, whatever it is, is vastly more complex and varied than all the speculations and all the theories proposed thus far. You are about to read not only about objects that come and go in the sky, and land on the earth, but also craft and occupants that interact with humans, occasionally causing harm, and often behaving in ways that appear so absurd, yet so consistent, that they bring all our rational interpretations to their knees.

It would be satisfying to be able to deny these facts. It would be nice to assume that the author was simply mistaken, or that he exaggerated the stories he had heard. Perhaps he had a bad interpreter? Perhaps the local people got carried away by their local beliefs in sorcery and spiritism? Perhaps the witnesses wanted to impress the American journalist with a repertoire of tall tales? Some reviewers will undoubtedly be tempted to take that facile approach.

If they are so tempted, and if they take the trouble of checking the facts, they will quickly realize their mistake. Far from exaggerating the widespread nature, the weirdness and the importance of UFO encounters in South America, Mr. Pratt has actually understated his case. No critic will get away with a superficial examination of his findings.

As a scientist who has researched the same material in the course of three separate trips to Brazil (to the regions of Sao Paulo, of Rio de Janeiro and of the Northeast), I realize that my own data is more limited than the rich harvest gathered by Mr. Pratt. But it is extensive enough to offer first-hand confirmation of its reality. Independently of him, I
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came across some of the same reports. The doctors he interviewed are real. They describe injuries that are well-documented. The military experts, some of whom provided their own testimony about UFOs they observed in the course of their duties, are real too. Mr. Pratt traveled everywhere with experienced interpreters and with the support of dedicated local researchers, themselves technically skilled persons.

If there is one weakness in this account, it comes from the difficulty in conveying the awesome, the massive reality of the impact caused by the UFO phenomenon all over the magnificent land of Brazil. One has to stand on the banks of the Amazon at dusk to grasp the enormity of the mystery that surrounds us, and the opportunity it offers for new knowledge. The feeling is overwhelming. It is almost impossible to convey in a book. We must be satisfied with glimpses of that other reality which teases us, plays with us, and occasionally, as this book demonstrates so dramatically, hurts any human being who comes into contact with it, as if it was entirely indifferent to our fate on this planet.

For that enigma of the ultimate nature and purpose of the phenomenon, Mr. Pratt has no answer, and neither does modern science. Thanks to his work, however, the day is a little closer when we may begin a serious examination of the evidence.

Dr. Jacques Vallee, 29 January, 1996

Introduction

The world is full of many terrors. This book is about one of them, a terror that comes from some place other than Earth. It's a terror that the world's governments ignore or claim doesn't exist, perhaps because there's no way they can protect their citizens from it.

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The terror comes from UFOs-unidentified flying objects —and the aliens that operate them. These aliens are not our space brothers coming here to help us, as so many people want to believe. These are nonhuman creatures that for years have been tormenting and terrorizing human beings, hurting many and killing some.

In the past fifty years, hundreds of thousands of people around the world have had close encounters with these aliens, often face to face. Most of these incidents appear to have been relatively harmless, but there is an insensitive, even cruel, side to the aliens that cannot be ignored. Since the 1970s, and probably much earlier, terrible things have been done to people in Brazil-perhaps more so than in all other countries combined-and these cosmic muggings are still occurring.

This book is about what happened to several dozen victims, most of whom told me their stories during more than six months of field investigations in Brazil conducted over ten visits between May 1978 and July 1993. Some people could not testify because they're incapacitated or dead.

This book makes no attempt to convince people that UFOs are real. Most of the people in the world have long accepted the reality of UFOs, and any objective, open-minded investigator will come to the same conclusion.

Frequently, an encounter of the unhealthy kind peculiar to Brazil begins when a UFO appears without warning just above the head of someone at night, revealing itself in a burst of sudden daylight and then chasing the terrified man, woman or child as he or she flees in terror. At times, UFOs have tried to pull a victim up into their craft with some unseen force, and sometimes they've taken people away. They've also used grappling hooks to snag unfortunate souls, and dropped hot liquid on the arms and shoulders of others to make them let go of trees and bushes.

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Some hapless victims have been paralyzed during encounters. Others have hidden, horror-stricken, as UFOs tried for hours to flush them out of their hiding places. Not even homes have been safe, as beams of lights from UFOs have pierced tile roofs like lasers and burned men and women inside.

Even when a person isn't injured, he or she is nearly always traumatized. They are confronted by a strange airborne machine with seemingly magical powers and humanoid creatures who try to take them away. Even the simple sighting of a fiery ball of light in the sky can be terrifying because almost everyone knows of someone who had been chased, hurt or killed by these things.

UFOs have been particularly grim news for people living in the small towns, farms and forests of central and northeastern Brazil, where most of the incidents related in this book took place. To these people, this terror is very real and has many names. Among the most common names are *chupa*,[1] *chupa-chupa* or *chupa sanguine*, terms that come from the Portuguese verb *chupar*, meaning to suck.

Many people believe the Chupa-Chupa sucks blood or energy from humans and animals. There is some evidence that this does occur.

Depending on who you talk to, this alien aggressor is also called the Light, the Fire, the Animal, the Worm, the Apparatus, the Machine, the Thing, the Train and the Object. Frequently it's *Disco Voador* (flying saucer) or just *Disco*. The Portuguese equivalent of UFO is OVNI (*objeto voador nao identificado*) but few people use that when they tell about their terrifying experiences. For them, this is something very real and personal with a definite identity, a terror that comes from the sky without warning.

The fact that these violent experiences appear to be happening mostly in Brazil doesn't mean Americans or people

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in other countries are safe from attack. UFOs are seen throughout the United States and in every country in the world, and what is happening in Brazil could happen anywhere.

Why is an American writing a book about Brazilian UFOs? Because my search for answers to this UFO malevolence has taken me across a broader stretch of the country than perhaps any other researcher has covered. I've investigated cases from the middle of the Amazon all across northern Brazil and down the east coast to the southernmost state on the border with Uruguay, but I've concentrated my efforts on the Northeast, where so much of the harmful activity has taken place.

Brazil is one of the largest nations in the world, with one hundred sixty million people living in a land as big as the United States. Yet, there are only three hundred to four hundred active UFO investigators, and most of them live in the major cities within a hundred miles of the seacoast. Vast regions of many states, and sometimes entire states, have no investigators at all. Much that happens never comes to the attention of any researcher.

There are many excellent researchers in Brazil who have been extraordinarily helpful to me over the years and still are. Many of the cases reported in this book were first investigated by them, and they have generously shared their data with me and made it possible for me to meet the people who've had these terrible UFO experiences.

When I first began going to Brazil to look into UFO incidents, I had resources beyond the reach of most investigators. My first four trips, in 1978, 1979 and 1980, were made as a reporter for a magazine that paid all my expenses. This allowed me to do many things that most researchers can't afford to do, such as spend weeks at a time on one case, travel wherever I needed to go, and hire cars, planes, boats, guides, interpreters and whatever else
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needed.

It was during these early visits that I began to hear about people getting hurt and killed by UFOs. Until then I had thought UFOs were harmless, and I began to concentrate on this aspect of the phenomenon. I left the magazine in 1981 and since then have gone back to Brazil six times on my own, looking for new clues as to why UFOs have been on the rampage there.

This search for answers is part of a deep interest in UFOs that came relatively late in my life. Until 1975 any mention of UFOs usually brought a caustic comment from me. For much of my more than forty years as a reporter and editor, I viewed the world in what I considered to be a scientific way. If common sense said things couldn't possibly be, then they weren't. And common sense said at the time UFOs couldn't possibly exist.

At one time during my career I was managing editor of a daily newspaper in Virginia, and I never allowed UFO stories to appear in the newspaper. The same went for ghosts, poltergeists, Bigfoot and so on, simply because there was no doubt in my mind that they were all nonsense. I "knew" this without having to investigate such reports, and nothing could change my mind.

Obviously, something did, at least about UFOs. Today, I have no doubt they're real, and although I'm still uncertain about ghosts and the other things, I no longer have a closed mind to such possibilities. This belief in the reality of UFOs comes not from having seen one but from having talked with people who have--so far about seventeen hundred people in Brazil and nine other countries.

UFOs became real to me during the second week of May 1975. At the time I was working as a reporter and was sent to northern Wisconsin to look into claims that a UFO had landed on a farm near Superior. I had never worked on a

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UFO story before. I never took UFOs seriously, and I was absolutely certain that people were seeing something that could be explained. I believed that if I asked the right kinds of questions, I would eventually find the truth. That was what I was thinking as I flew to Wisconsin, welcoming the opportunity to finally find out for myself just what was causing people to make wild claims about seeing flying saucers.

I spent a week in northern Wisconsin and neighboring parts of Minnesota and Upper Michigan. I talked to not only the family who saw the UFO that landed but more than sixty other people who'd seen UFOs in incidents unrelated to the landing. Most of the sightings were at night. Some were in the daytime. Many people had seen strange lights moving through the sky in an erratic manner. Others had scary close encounters with big, menacing objects that had definite shapes.

Sixteen of the witnesses were police officers. Among the others were farmers, business people, housewives, secretaries, factory workers, a wildlife biologist, a pharmacist, a machinist, a university student and several high school students. Most were adults. All seemed to be solid people who had no reason to make up such wild stories.

One very credible person was an elementary school principal who was also an Air National Guard lieutenant colonel. He told me that one night some years earlier he had been scrambled to intercept a UFO that had been spotted over a radar station seventy-five miles north of Duluth. As soon as he and his pilot were airborne in their jet fighter, their radar detected the UFO-and the UFO instantly disappeared. The men on duty at the radar station had been standing outside looking up at the UFO as it hovered about a thousand feet above the building. The colonel and his pilot were told by radio that as soon as the jet's radar locked onto the object, it shot straight up—and the ground radar tracked

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it a hundred miles high into the sky before it disappeared from the scope seconds later.

In that week in Superior and Duluth, I heard many unbelievable stories. I asked every one of those sixty to seventy people who'd had UFO experiences every question I could think of--and I was amazed. Stunned, perhaps. I couldn't explain what any of them had seen. It was a sobering experience, one that made me begin to realize how little I really knew about our world. I've been chasing UFOs ever since.

They are a genuine mystery, as baffling and fascinating today as they were when I accepted their reality in 1975. The one thing I do know for a fact is this: The more you learn about the UFO phenomenon, the more complex it becomes and the more you realize how little you really know about it.

Whatever it is, there is a definite dark side to the phenomenon, and the purpose of this book is to reveal enough of that side in the hope that we might find out what it is we're dealing with.

There's no way of knowing yet whether UFOs will have any lasting significance for the people of Earth, but by the time we find out, it may be too late.

1. Say SHOO-puh.

PART ONE

UNDER ATTACK

Chapter One

ATTACK ON MOISES

On a warm, Sunday evening in May 1991 a mild-mannered farmer in his thirties named Moises Campelo left

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his brother's house near the church and trudged down a hill on his way home. It was dark and a light rain was falling, but Moises hadn't opened the umbrella he carried.[1] After some two hundred yards, the land leveled out and he began climbing another long, sloping hill toward his own home about a mile away. Five to six minutes later he passed a neighbor's house and a hundred yards or so beyond that reached the top of the hill. Then a flash caught his eye.

He glanced to his right and saw a small, bright light on the crest of another mountain two miles to the east. It's just a car, he thought, and again looked down on the path barely visible before him. But before he'd taken three or four more steps, the light was suddenly right above Moises. It had covered that distance with surprising quickness, startling him.

The light was big and so bright that it hurt his eyes to look at it. It made no noise. It seemed to be as large as a house and was slowly spinning around. He was more curious than afraid, but had he known what was going to happen to him, he would have run away as fast as he could.

This was the beginning of a strange, hostile assault on Moises that cannot yet be rationally explained. To Moises, it was a UFO, and he survived the attack somehow, but when he told me his story sixteen months later, he was still afraid to go outside at night by himself, afraid his attacker would come back.

Sucked Upwards

As soon as the brightly lit object arrived that night, it had an immediate effect on him.

"I was paralyzed almost at once, and I thought the UFO was going to take me away," he said quietly as he sat in his living room. His left eye was bloodshot. It had been injured by the UFO and still had not healed. "It lit up everything around me, and it was very hot. And then I felt like I was

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being sucked upwards."

He said he began to rise in the air, upright, as if he were still walking. He couldn't feel anything touching him or holding him in the air, just the feeling of being pulled upwards by an unseen force.

"I got really scared," Moises said. "I was raised about one and a half meters.[2] I couldn't speak or cry for help, and I couldn't move. The light was very hot. I was terrified."

His body was so rigid that a package of cookies he was carrying under one arm was crushed. Moises doesn't know how long he was suspended under the UFO but thinks it was at least five minutes. All that time he was deathly afraid something bad was going to happen to him.

"But then they let me down very gently, and the light moved off a little ways," he said.

Moises was so unnerved that he collapsed on the ground. Meanwhile, the UFO sat motionless at treetop level not far away, still as bright as ever.

There are two houses within several hundred yards of where this happened and others a half mile away, but apparently no one else saw the light. Most of the homes in the area have wooden windows, which are closed and latched from the inside at night for security and to keep the rain and mosquitoes out. Glass windows and screens are rare.

Moises was too dizzy to walk and his eyes were smarting from the light. Slowly he began dragging himself on his hands and knees toward his own home, still two to three hundred yards away.

Attacked Again

"I was crawling on the ground like a lizard because I couldn't walk," he said. "I got about a hundred meters and crawled under a little tree, where I rested for a moment. Then I went on again and, just as I started to come out from

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the other side of the tree, they came back and got me again."

By now the UFO had moved back over Moises, with only the branches of the tree separating them, and suddenly he found himself being pulled upward a second time. He stopped rising about three feet off the ground and was in a crouching position, as if he were still crawling.

"My head hit the branches when I went up," he said. "I was paralyzed again, and this time I felt very cold. I couldn't move. I couldn't shout for help, and the light was hurting my eyes again. The thing was above me, going around and around and around."

This time Moises believes he was held in the air for as long as fifteen minutes. He remained conscious throughout but terrified. There was nothing he could do but pray.

Finally, the UFO moved away for good, going out of his range of vision. Until that moment it had made no noise at all, but as it drifted off, Moises could hear a low humming sound like a quiet turbine. As it left, Moises felt the paralysis quickly end and he fell to the ground like a lead weight.

"They just dropped me hard," he said. In great pain and terribly afraid the UFO would come back a third time, he crawled home as fast as he could. "My left eye began to swell and bulge out of my head, and I couldn't see out of it by the time I got home."

When he reached his house, he banged frantically on the door until his wife let him in. He was almost hysterical and couldn't immediately tell her what happened.

"I sank down in a chair, and for fifteen minutes I couldn't speak," Moises said. "A little later I peeked out the front door and saw the light over the church. When all this was happening to me, the light was white, but when it was over the church, it looked like a huge red ball. It was rocking back and forth like a pendulum."

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Moises is one of hundreds of people in Brazil who have been subjected to bizarre attacks by UFOs for at least thirty years and possibly much longer. Most of the victims are terrorized but otherwise unharmed but some have been injured and a few were left dead or dying. Thousands of people may have been assaulted, but just how many may never be known. Brazil is huge and heavily populated, and no person or organization or government agency collects information on all of the close encounters that occur throughout the country.

Too Few Investigators

For more than fifty years now, UFOs have been seen in virtually every nation in the world at some time or other, and sometimes frequently, with sightings or close encounters occurring somewhere nearly every day. But to my knowledge it is only in Brazil — not neighboring countries or the United States or any other nation in the world -- that UFOs have been so overtly hostile. No one knows why.

There are only a few hundred UFO investigators among the one hundred sixty million inhabitants of Brazil. All are civilians who work on their own, devoting whatever time and money they can afford to look into reports of UFO incidents. The government has shown an occasional interest but is not known to be actively investigating the phenomenon, at least on a regular basis. Thus, there are large areas of the nation where there are no investigators, and most sightings and close encounters go unreported.

Cynthia Luce, a fellow investigator, and I learned about Moises Campelo by accident. We had been looking for a woman who'd had a similar experience on the same mountain a dozen years earlier, but we learned she had moved away, and neighbors told us about Moises.

We found him at his modest home on a small mountain farm called Sitio Timbauba, a few miles north of the town of

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Campo Redondo.[3] This is in the state of Rio Grande do Norte in northeastern Brazil, where little rain falls. About a fifth as big as Arizona, Rio Grande do Norte looks much like it, with mountains and deserts and semi- arid farmland where people have to survive droughts that occur every decade and often last for years.

A Media Event

Moises is a wiry man about five-foot-six with curly black hair, intense dark eyes and a heavy, five o'clock shadow. He weighs about one-hundred-thirty pounds. His wife and children and half a dozen neighbors and relatives crowded into his living room to listen as we talked. Cynthia was interpreting.[4] She and I seemed to be as much the center of attention as Moises was as he told us what happened to him. Most of these people had never seen Americans before.

Throughout the years since my first trip to Brazil in 1978, crowds have often gathered whenever I visited quiet, little settlements or farm areas where there's not much excitement and few strangers are ever seen.

Several times in 1978, 1979 and 1981, I hired a small plane and pilot and flew to remote villages with friends or interpreters. We'd circle a community trying to find a place to land (on two occasions a churchyard and narrow lane just beyond had to do) or as a signal for a taxi to come and meet us if there was a landing strip. Once on the ground, we'd be surrounded by a hundred kids and adults before we even climbed down from the plane. Many had never seen an American before, and the children were greatly amused by the funny way I speak, breaking into peels of laughter every time I opened my mouth.

The novelty would soon wear off and most would leave, but sometimes a dozen or more kids and adults would follow us as we walked through the village talking to people who'd had UFO experiences. Then our entourage would escort us

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back to the plane several hours later and wave as we took off.

Even in recent visits it was sometimes difficult to conduct an interview in peace and quiet. Late one Sunday afternoon in July 1993, I talked to a young man just as a soccer game was ending in a nearby farm field. Within five minutes we were surrounded by all the spectators from the game, plus most of the players.

The same thing often happens when going to the home of someone like Moises, but on a smaller scale. His house is about two miles from the main highway. It is easily accessible by car unless a rare rain has turned into mud the lanes that go up and down the hills between the highway and his home. Few people in the area own cars, but cars are not uncommon, and they don't attract as much attention as a plane swooping down out of the sky. Thus, our "audiences" are smaller.

Lasting Effects

As Moises finished telling us his story, he said: "I thought they were going to take me to Europe." Everyone laughed, including Moises, but it wasn't funny the night the UFO tormented him or for some time after it was over.

"I was numb on my left side for three to four months," he said. "My left side around my waist and hip felt paralyzed."

He also had trouble with his left eye for a year and a half. "It swelled so much that I couldn't sleep at night for a while afterwards because I couldn't close it. I was blind in it for a few days, and I still have trouble with it."

The eye appeared to be irritated. One problem was that it hadn't been properly treated. He said a doctor told him he needed an operation, and three times he went to a hospital, and each time the electricity failed. He never had the

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operation.

The land on this part of the mountain belongs to Moises' mother. He's lived and worked here all his life and has no intention of leaving even though he knows UFOs are still in the area.

"1 don't go out alone at night anymore," he said. "I only go out when somebody else is with me."

I interviewed Moises in September 1992 and again in July 1993. He is just one of the approximately seventeen hundred UFO witnesses I've talked to in ten countries since 1975. His story is not an isolated incident. Brazil is full of people who've been victims of appalling UFO encounters.

In fact, one of the women who was listening to our interview with Moises said that less than a week earlier her daughter and son-in-law, both nineteen, and three young girls had to hide from a UFO. The five young people had been walking to the couple's home on a mountain two miles west of Moises' home when the incident occurred.

"It was about seven o'clock at night," the woman, Moises' sister, Severina Campelo, said. "It was dark and they were walking up the hill when a bright light came on above them and tried to suck them up. They all ran under an old cashew tree and hung onto it for two hours until the light finally went away."

Unfortunately, we didn't have time to find the young people to talk to them, and when I went back to Sitio Timbauba in 1993, the couple had moved away.

What Do We Know?

What could have so frightened Moises that he dreads going outside by himself at night? His tormentor suddenly appeared from nowhere, pulled him off the ground twice within thirty minutes, subjected him to extreme heat and cold and a paralysis that kept him from moving or speaking,

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dropped him gently the first time and very hard the second. The light was blindingly bright, a brilliant white when near him but red when he last saw it in the distance, rocking back and forth in the sky.

What was this mysterious object? Obviously, it was a machine of some kind with an intelligent creature or creatures controlling it. It sought him out twice, spotting him the first time in the dark from a distance of two miles. It wasn't a plane or helicopter because it was silent during most of the incident, it hovered effortlessly above him, and there was no prop wash or downdraft from rotor blades. It wasn't a blimp or any other kind of aircraft because later, when it was near the church, it was rocking like a pendulum. Finally, no government in the world, so far as we know, has any aircraft that can lift a person with a beam of light and suspend him in the air, paralyze and injure him and then let him down gently or hard as it wishes.

It was a UFO or unidentified flying object, but that doesn't tell us much because we don't yet know what UFOs are. Almost everyone, it seems, believes he or she "knows" what UFOs are, but the fact is that no one really knows anything for certain.

However, we can learn from Moises' experience because it gives us clues that, when added to what we learn from other victims, may one day help us find out what UFOs are all about. And there are many clues.

Several other people have told me they were also levitated, although none of them twice as Moises was. In this sense, what happened to him is unique. There are other strange elements as well that set his incident apart from others: (A) The brilliant light that makes everything as bright as daylight; (B) The paralysis; (C) Moises' inability to speak or cry out for help; (D) His feeling very cold in the midst of extreme heat when he was picked up the second time.

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Cynthia Luce suggested that Moises might have gone into shock, which could account for the coldness in spite of the heat. Other victims who have felt cold have themselves suggested they may have suffered shock. On the other hand, some who reported feeling both cold and hot simultaneously also said that everything around them was cold as if they were in an air-conditioned room, but that the coldness ended just as soon as the UFO moved away.

Other people besides Moises have been pulled off the ground. Many more have resisted in one way or another. Some have even been snatched up by hooks, and a few have actually been taken away. Many have been chased by UFOs and still others have been burned, zapped and otherwise hurt. Some have died.

We have much to learn, but one thing we can say for certain is that this is an aggressive phenomenon and no man, woman or child, Brazilian or otherwise, is safe from it.

1. Brazilians speak Portuguese and Moises is the Portuguese equivalent of Moses. Because some names in this book may be difficult for readers, footnotes will be used occasionally as guides to pronunciation. Referring to someone by his or her first name is a custom in Brazil. Even high-ranking officials, including the president of the country, will often be called by their first name in newspaper headlines.
2. About five feet. Brazil uses the metric system. A meter is 3.37 inches longer than a yard. Since most sizes and distances given in this book are only estimates by the witnesses, readers who don't operate on the metric system can regard a meter as about equal to a yard. A kilometer, or a thousand meters, is .62 of a mile; ten kilometers is 6.2 miles.
3. A *sitio* is a farm.
4. Cynthia Luce is an American who has lived in the

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mountain village of Sao Jose do Vale do Rio Preto northwest of Rio de Janeiro since 1975. She speaks Portuguese fluently and together we investigated numerous UFO incidents in northeastern and central Brazil in 1991 and 1992.

Chapter Two

HORROR IN THE NIGHT

Moises never got a good look at what or who attacked him. A few years earlier and not far away, Januncio De Souza was similarly assaulted, but he did see the UFO and his tormentors -- a man and a woman sitting inside it.

Januncio could have walked out of a Marlboro ad or a western movie.[1] He was six feet tall, at seventy-eight lean and still rugged looking with white hair and flowing mustache, high cheekbones, a prominent nose and a permanent tan from spending most of his life working the land under the blazing, equatorial sun. He was a tough, old man of moderate wealth and power, one of the larger landowners in the region. Thirteen families lived on his farm and worked for him, growing cotton, beans, corn and livestock.

Januncio had no reason to fear anyone but, like Moises, he was afraid of the dark. Something evil lurked in the black, night sky that absolutely terrified him. It almost got him once, and he wasn't going to give it another chance.

Januncio is the nickname that Francisco Henrique De Souza was given as a boy. He was born on this thirteen-hundred-acre farm, which has been in the family for more than a century. It is spread across rolling, sandy hills twelve miles southeast of Santa Cruz in Rio Grande do Norte, and twenty-five miles southeast of where Moises lives.

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Life was relatively peaceful and simple for Januncio until one night in early January 1979, when something came down from the sky and tried to snatch him away. That evening, he had visited a neighbor. About eight o'clock, he started walking home, nearly two miles away. Halfway home, he lit a cigarette, and that's when his nightmare began.

Less than fifty steps beyond, a huge, dark apparatus suddenly appeared just above his head. It was as if the flare of the match had been a beacon that the strange machine spotted from high in the sky and had zeroed in on.

"It was only about three meters above me," Januncio said, still awed by the experience when he told me his story four weeks later. "I didn't see it coming, and it didn't make a sound. It was just there."

Like a Magnet

The apparition badly frightened Januncio. "It was like a big silo," he said. It was at least twenty-five feet tall and had a round bottom twelve to fifteen feet in diameter.

"A door opened on the bottom," he continued, spreading his hands apart to show what it looked like. "And I could see a man and a woman sitting in seats like a car. They were sitting still, alive but very still and stiff. They never moved. The woman looked like she was wearing a dress.

"When the door opened, a lot of light came out, and I felt like I was being pulled up into the object. It was like a magnet. I grabbed a small palm tree and wrapped my arms and legs around it. The light was very hot, and I was terrified."

Januncio weighed about one-hundred-seventy pounds, and even though he had an iron grip on the tree, the pull from the UFO was so great that he was dragged up the trunk until his feet left the ground. Then gravity pulled him back down.

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"This happened five times," he said, raising and lowering his arms. "Up and down, again and again. My chest was scraped raw."

Januncio said he began crying and thought he was going to die. "Then when the man and woman saw I wasn't going to let go, they dropped something like hot oil on me to make me let go of the tree. I felt like I was between two big fires. I couldn't move. It burned my arms and hurt very much, but I was too afraid to let go. I almost died I was so scared."

The light was unbearably hot, he said. "It lasted less than two minutes. If it had lasted any longer, I believe I would've died because it was so very hot. When I wouldn't let go, they closed the door, the light went out and the thing went away real fast, like lightning."

The object went straight up into the sky and vanished. Januncio never heard a sound at any time. When his eyes became adjusted to the darkness again, he ran home, his clothes soaked with sweat.

He told me his story as we sat in a large, sparsely furnished room with a high ceiling. Januncio's home consists of several adjoining buildings and is one of the largest in the area, with a small chapel in the backyard. It was early afternoon and the only light in the room came from an open doorway and several windows. It was cool and pleasant.

Januncio's wife Nina and two other women sat in chairs facing us, listening as they shelled peas or beans in their laps. Nina nodded from time to time as Januncio talked. She knew the story by heart.

"He was very scared when I opened the door," Nina said, telling how Januncio came running home after the encounter. "He told me he thought the people in the flying saucer were going to take him away because he'd heard that this happens. We didn't believe those stories before, but we

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do now."

From Another World

Januncio's burns and scrapes had healed by then and I could see no trace of them.

"I was sick for two days afterward," he said. "I couldn't eat. I had a bad headache, my chest was scratched and red, and my arms had burns on them like cigarette burns."

Asked what he thought the object was, Januncio said: "I don't know. I thought it was a flying saucer because I'd heard about them before. It doesn't make any noise. It's like an invisible object. You just see the lights. To my mind, this is not from this world. It's from another world. Everybody around here is scared of the object. Everybody has seen the light. Last week they saw it every night. One man defecated all over himself he was so scared."

Januncio sat silent for a minute, staring across the room. Then he sighed and said: "I thought that thing was going to take me away. I don't go out at night anymore. I'm afraid it will come back."

He smiled sadly. As much as any man could be, he was master of the world around him, but he was afraid to step outside when it's dark.

A long time after this happened, Januncio got over much of his fear and occasionally ventured out at night, but life was never again the same for him. The robust vitality he had enjoyed before the incident was gone and his health was poor the rest of his life.

He died in 1991 at the age of ninety, outliving all but four of the twenty children he and Nina had brought into this world. Many of them had succumbed to childhood diseases in an era when Brazil had fewer doctors and hospitals.

Januncio's case has always had a special meaning for me. I have talked to other people who have had worse

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experiences, but for many years his was the one case against which I measured all others. Few matched it for sheer horror, brute force and crudeness. Those of us who believe UFOs are real almost automatically think of them as being far superior to us technologically. Yet in this case— and at least one other, as I was to learn — the occupants resorted to dropping hot oil, apparently in an effort to make their victims release their grip. Are these creatures really from an advanced civilization?

Whatever the answer, Januncio's experience gives us additional clues about UFOs. As with Moises, the object just suddenly appeared overhead but Januncio did see a shape, something tall and cylindrical with a man and woman inside it. He had to endure heat so intense he thought it might burn up the tree and kill him.[2]

Creatures Aren't Human

At the same time, the UFO exerted a force so powerful that Januncio was dragged up the tree five times, even though he hugged it with a death grip. When that didn't work, hot liquid was dropped on him to make him let go. When he still hung on, the object disappeared instantly — all this without making a sound.

The encounter left him sick for two days, unable to eat and with a bad headache, scratches on his chest and burns on his arms. The event was so traumatic that it affected his health the rest of his life, and he never fully regained his strength.

The occupants of the UFOs that attacked Moises and Januncio didn't seem to care that they were terrorizing and endangering the lives of these men. But for what purpose? To see Moises' look of horror as he hung in the air paralyzed? Or his pain as they pounced on him again as he was trying to crawl away? Or to watch old Januncio crying as he hung onto the palm tree for dear life and squirmed in agony when they

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dropped scalding liquid on him?

But empathy and caring are human emotions, and these UFO creatures are not human — an important point to remember. If they have emotions, they may not be ones that we humans can relate to.

For a dozen years I thought Januncio's experience was truly one of a kind. In talking with hundreds of other people around the world who'd had strange UFO experiences, I'd never heard anything like it. But in 1991 I discovered that Januncio's encounter was not unique at all. An almost identical incident occurred right in his own neighborhood just months later — with a bizarre twist.

1. The letter J in Portuguese is pronounced the same as in English. Thus, Januncio De Souza would be called Jah-NOON-see-oh Day SOO-zah.
2. In another case to be related later, a UFO hovering over a tree radiated such intense heat that the tree did burn and break in two, just seconds after a young man who had been hiding under it fled because the heat had become so unbearable.

Chapter Three

A FAMILY AFFAIR?

Januncio's experience and some of the other UFO incidents to be related later occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. They may seem like ancient history to some people, but let's talk about it.

No one knows what time scale UFOs operate on. Our concept of time is based on the rotation of the earth on its axis for defining a day and our circling the sun for what we call a year. Splitting the day into hours, minutes and seconds

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was something some clever people did so long ago that we don't know who to credit or blame.

Our definition of time may be completely meaningless to the crews of UFOs, especially if they come from alien worlds with longer or shorter days or years or whatever they have. For all we know, our year 1979 may be last week or last night for them. And the guys who tormented Januncio in 1979 and Moises in 1991 may have just gone off for a coffee break in between.

In each of my field trips to Brazil since 1978, most of the people I talked to had undergone their UFO experiences very recently -- just a few days, weeks or months before. This means those encounters were fresh events at the time of the interviews. This was particularly true in 1991, 1992, and 1993 when over half of the more than one hundred cases I investigated had taken place in the twelve months preceding the interviews. Some had occurred just the day or week before.

This means that UFOs are still around. They've been active in Brazil for many years and appear to be as active today as ever.[1] So far as I can tell, there's never been any let up, although UFOs tend to move from place to place, concentrating on one area for a while and then another. Events much like those recounted here can be happening right now or could happen somewhere soon.

Another Attack

In this book, cases are being discussed in a particular sequence — generally from "routine" encounters to more harmful and deadly ones — to reveal the patterns that run through most of these cases, similarities that tie them together, old and new. This is important, because we can't begin to deal with these intruders from somewhere else until we have a clear picture of them and what they're doing.

Some incidents don't come to light for many years, yet

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they're still significant for what they tell us about the phenomenon. The following case is an example, and we discovered it only in 1991, long after it occurred.

In one of those curious and amazing coincidences that seem to abound in UFO investigations, the next victim of an attack like Januncio's was one of Januncio's own sons. His name is Benedito Henrique De Souza, better known as Beato.[2] He had an almost identical encounter just a few months after Januncio did and only a mile or so away.

The father of eight children, Beato lives with his family about two miles from the main house on Fazenda Cacaruaba, the ancestral farm.[3] He is built much like his father and has a ruddy complexion, dark hair and a graying mustache.

Beato was thirty nine when a UFO tried to abduct him. Cynthia Luce and I talked to him in 1991 and again in 1992. He couldn't remember the date of the attack, only that it was during the dry season between August and November in 1979. He'd had dinner with friends and between seven and eight o'clock in the evening started walking home, only a third of a mile away. There was no moon and it was dark.

About halfway home he lit a cigarette, then continued walking. In a virtual repeat of Januncio's incident, the flame of his lighter must have attracted the attention of something in the sky, and without warning an object suddenly appeared just above him.

Hole in the Bottom

"I didn't see it coming," Beato said. "It was just there. It came right down, seven or eight meters above me. The bottom part seemed like a fishing net. When I looked up, there was a hole on the bottom and a lot of light was coming from inside it. It was like daylight inside."

Beato immediately felt himself being pulled up. Badly frightened, he quickly squatted down, grabbed the base of a

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huge desert bush about ten feet tall and hung on with both hands.

"I thought it was going to take me away," he explained. "It was an incredible light and was like a vacuum cleaner that was trying to suck me up. I felt they were trying to suck me up into that hole."

The light was so bright he couldn't look at it very long, but he did see three people inside the craft, two men and a woman.

"I couldn't stand the light," Beato said. "It hurt my eyes very much. I looked up and saw the people but had to turn away because I couldn't stand the light."

The pull was strong but he never left the ground. And, just as had happened with his father, when he wouldn't let go of the bush, tiny drops of scalding liquid fell on his shoulders. "It splattered when it hit and was very, very hot. It burned me."

Despite the pain, he was too terrified to let go, and suddenly the object simply vanished. Beato didn't see it go or hear anything. He had his head bent down to avoid looking at the light, and in an instant all the light around him disappeared, and he no longer felt anything pulling him up. "When I looked up, the thing was gone," he said.

The entire incident lasted only about three minutes, Beato believes, but it seemed much longer. He was momentarily blinded because of the light. "I stayed there for a bit, and then I ran home."

When he got home, his wife examined him and found about a dozen tiny burns on his shoulders. Beato doesn't know what kind of liquid fell on him.

"It was like a few drops of hot oil," he said. "It passed through my shirt and didn't leave any stain. It just evaporated."

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He didn't see the drops falling, and was aware of them only when they hit his shoulders. The object was directly above him at the time.

Hardly Worth Keeping

There's no way of knowing whether this was the same object that attacked his father. Neither man was very precise in describing the objects. Januncio saw something shaped like a silo but with a round bottom twelve to fifteen feet wide. What Beato saw was long and round and with a bottom he estimated to be about twenty feet wide. Both men could have been seeing bell-shaped objects.

Beato didn't see anything inside the object other than the people, and then only from the chest up.

"I think there was one woman and two men," he said. "There was one with long shoulder-length red hair, anyway. One of the men looked at me like this." Beato gave a disdainful shrug. "He was looking at me as if I wasn't very interesting. I had the impression the other two were looking beyond me, elsewhere."

The three people seemed to be sitting in seats, the woman a bit closer to him than the men. He didn't notice what they were wearing.

Throughout the incident Beato didn't hear any sound. "If there was a sound 1 was so scared I don't remember."

Januncio heard no sound either. The two incidents were remarkably similar in nearly all respects except that Januncio saw two people and Beato three. One big difference is that in Beato's case one of the occupants appeared to react to him personally, even though it seemed to be just a shrug of contempt. All the others in both incidents were like robots or seemed preoccupied.

One other new element in Beato's case is that his first impression when looking up at the light was that it looked

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like a fishing net falling toward him. This aspect has been reported in several other cases and will be discussed later.

Beato's eyes hurt because of the brilliant light, and for several days he couldn't stand looking at anything bright. Unlike Januncio, Beato had no headaches or other physical effects except for the burns. But, like Moises and his father, he was afraid to go out at night after that.

"It was two months before I went out at night again," he said. "And I still don't smoke outside at night anymore, unless someone is with me."

He first told us his story in September 1991, twelve years after the incident. With me were Cynthia Luce and Jose Jean Alencar, an investigator from Fortaleza. At that time, I didn't know Beato was Januncio's son. Cynthia, Jean and I had driven from Fortaleza to Campina Grande in the state of Paraiba to meet with a group of young UFO investigators and look into some cases there. We decided to return to Fortaleza by way of Rio Grande do Norte, the state just north of Paraiba. I hadn't planned to go to Rio Grande do Norte on this trip and hadn't reviewed any files from my earlier investigations there.

I remembered most of the details of Januncio's case but, regrettably, not his name. All I could think of when talking to Beato was "Juscelino" and I was astounded that he'd had an encounter almost identical to "Juscelino's" and in the same area. Yet Beato didn't know any "Juscelino."

Return to Cacaruaba

When I returned home and dug into my files, I was even more amazed to find the two men had almost identical names — Francisco Henrique De Souza and Benedito Henrique De Souza -- but was chagrined to discover I had called the older man Juscelino instead of Januncio. No wonder Beato nor any of his neighbors knew who I was talking about.

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The curious "coincidence" continued to gnaw at me, and I had to find out whether there was any connection between the two men. This was one of the reasons why I returned to Brazil in September 1992. I also wanted to ask Beato many more questions than occurred to me the first time. A review of the first interview revealed a number of details I hadn't inquired about.

This is always a major problem in investigating cases in another country. If you don't do a great job of interviewing the first time, you may have to wait two or three years or more before you can go back and correct your mistakes.

Cynthia Luce and I returned to Fazenda Cacaruaba in 1992 and found Beato with his ten-year-old son and a handful of men building a well with cement walls at the bottom of a field on his farm. It was late in the morning and the sun was broiling hot, so we stepped into the shade of a tree. For more than a half hour Beato graciously answered a long list of new questions I had prepared. He also told us about his father's final years.

Everything Beato said was recorded on audio tape, but a stiff breeze was blowing at times and some of his responses were obliterated by the wind, a hazard in outdoor interviews. Still, most of the important points were covered, and a third interview won't be necessary.

Beato now owns about a fourth of the old family farm and was very much in charge of the men working for him that day without being obvious about it. Lunch time was approaching but he took time to answer all of our questions and pose for photographs, squatting beneath a *catingueira*, a large bush similar to the one that he hid under when he was attacked.

If things like this happened to Moises, Januncio and Beato, how many others were attacked? No one knows. I have talked to at least forty other people in Brazil who have

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had similarly bizarre experiences, but there could be ten to a thousand times that many, for reasons that will be explained later. Sadly, not all of the forty others were as fortunate as Moises, Januncio and Beato.

1. In her book *UFOs e Abducoes no Brasil* (*UFOs and Abductions in Brazil*), noted Brazilian ufologist Irene Granchi sets 1952 as the beginning of the "modern period" of UFOs in Brazil.
2. Bay-AH-toe.
3. Fa-ZEN-dah Ka-ka-roo-AH-bah. A *fazend*a is a large farm, plantation or ranch, as contrasted with a *sitio*, a small farm.

Chapter Four

UPLIFTING BUT TERRIFYING

If the encounters described in this book were graded on a scale of one to ten — one being just sightings of strange lights in the night sky and ten being the ultimate UFO experience, death — Moises' ordeal would probably be a seven. Januncio's and Beato's would be fives or sixes.

Encounters on the lower end of the scale are reported much more often. Although witnesses to lesser incidents are rarely harmed, those events can be nearly as traumatic as the more serious ones. Not as much information comes out of them, but they're important because they provide continuing evidence that UFOs are still with us after all these years, and they're as active as ever.

Those encounters on the upper end of the scale — attempted abductions, abductions, levitations, injuries and deaths — are reported less frequently but are much more significant because of what they reveal about UFOs and the

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effects they can have on people. They are what this book is about.

The attacks on Moises, Januncio and Beato were unusual, but other people have had encounters just as devastating and no less distressing. Alfredo Marques Soares is an example. He is a farm hand who was assaulted by a UFO in July 1977, eighteen months before a UFO tried to pry Januncio loose from the palm tree. Although Alfredo's case is relatively old, it is significant because it shows another aspect of the unusual powers that UFOs have.

Then fifty-five and widowed, Alfredo was walking home from a neighbor's house in Cardeiros, Ceara shortly after dark one evening when something hit him hard on the back of his left leg.[1]

Hurt All Over

"When I looked back I saw a big beam of light," he said. "It was yellowish-white and looked like a fishing net. I felt like something was trying to suck me up. I grabbed a wooden fence and hung on. It was a very strong pull, and I really had to struggle to keep from being pulled away. I hurt all over my body."

He tried to run under a cashew tree but instead found himself going in circles. "I couldn't move my leg," he said. "I couldn't straighten it out. It was numb and aching."

Alfredo never got a good look at the object. "The light blinded me, and I felt like I'd been shocked. It was very hot. I felt heat and cold at the same time. I was shaking very hard and I felt sick."

The UFO lit up a large area around him. It was so bright that he could see insects crawling on the ground. The incident lasted for only a few minutes but to him it seemed like a long time. It came to an end when the light around him began to grow dim. "I looked up and saw the ray of light

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disappearing," Alfredo said.

In agony, he dragged himself home and had his daughter examine the back of his leg. She told him it was black and blue and had been burned.

The next day he was still so upset that he began crying and had to lie down, shaking all over. When he calmed down, he went to a doctor who treated his burned leg.

"It was blistered, and the blisters became infected," said Alfredo. "Also I had to urinate a great deal. For two days I had a stomach ache, diarrhea and bad headaches, and my left side hurt."

For three months, he couldn't walk, and for three months after that, he had to use a crutch.

Fortaleza UFO researcher Jose Jean Alencar, who first investigated this case, took Cynthia Luce and me to meet Alfredo in September 1991. When Alfredo -- then seventy, retired and married again -- told us his story, he said his leg still bothers him. "I have to take a lot of medicine for it," he said.

In many ways Alfredo's experience was similar to the others discussed so far. Like Moises, he saw only a bright, blinding light and felt himself being pulled upward. Like Januncio and Beato, he was able to resist, by hanging onto a fence. As in Beato's encounter, he saw what looked like a falling fish net. Like Moises, he felt heat and coldness at the same time. And the nausea, diarrhea and headaches that he experienced are frequently reported in close encounters, not only in Brazil but throughout the world.

What was new, to me, was that Alfredo was injured by a UFO that was at least several hundred yards away from him. At that distance, it zapped him with a beam of light that burned his leg and left him crippled for six months.

Valley of the Old Women

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Other Brazilians have also been injured in similar abduction attempts, some of them being left permanently impaired, and the dual hot-cold feeling has shown up in other cases. However, not everyone is injured or tortured when they're exposed to a magnet-like pull.

Hulvio Brant Aleixo, a veteran researcher in central Brazil, has investigated a number of such cases.[2] He is a psychologist and university professor in Belo Horizonte and has spent more than forty years investigating UFO incidents in a region known as *Vale Das Velhas*, or the Valley of the Old Women, north of Belo Horizonte. During a discussion in his home in September 1992, he said that about fifteen of the more than three hundred close encounters he has investigated involved people who were pulled upward. Among them are the following:

CASE ONE. In the town of Baldim, a woman named Rosalia saw a light overhead. The light went out, and in the same instant, she felt herself being pulled up, although nothing was touching her. She grabbed a fence pole to save herself. However, she was so terrified that she tried to run, but once again felt herself being drawn upward, and again she grabbed the pole. She screamed for her husband. When he ran outside, the pull suddenly ended. Seconds later they both saw a light fly up from the bushes, pass thirty feet over their heads, circle the field and go away.

CASE TWO. Also in Baldim, a youth about eighteen was in a public plaza when he saw an object overhead and felt himself being pulled upward. He grabbed a tree and hung on until the UFO went away.

CASE THREE. In the town of Mocambo, a fourteen-year-old boy named Julianete saw a glowing object and felt himself being pulled up. However, he didn't grab anything and never left the ground. The most interesting aspect was that he reported the sensation of being pulled up was

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intermittent, not steady.

All three encounters took place in October 1978.

Dancing Points of Light

Similar incidents occurred elsewhere in Brazil during the 1970s and 1980s, and they're still going on. In August 1990, a farm woman had an encounter during which she felt not only heat and cold at the same time but also *downward* pressure while being pulled up.

Her name is Maria Natividade Cavalcante. She was fifty-six when Cynthia Luce and I interviewed her in September 1992. She's an intelligent, stocky woman with alert, dark eyes, a firm handshake and a sense of humor. She lives in a mud-walled home with a tile roof — typical among poor farm families — four miles south of Lajes in Rio Grande do Norte. Her home is about thirty-five miles north of Moises Campelo's farm and there's a mountain range in between.

Natividade has no electricity or running water in her home.[3] Oil lamps provide light, and water is hauled from a reservoir some distance away in barrels that are stored under a tree in her backyard. On the night this happened, she needed water to finish washing the dishes. It was dark, between six and seven o'clock. Because rabid foxes had been reported in the area, she asked her nineteen-year-old son, Jose, to go with her into the backyard as a precaution.

As soon as they got water out of the barrel, she sent him back in to finish his homework. He was already inside when she started back toward the house with the water. She was within a dozen steps of the back door when a bright light suddenly lit up above her. She froze in her tracks.

"I didn't want to look up," Natividade said. "I was frightened because it was so bright. I could see colored dots of light dancing on the ground all around me, all the colors of

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the rainbow, and I could feel myself being pulled up. At the same time, I felt as if something was pushing me down. It was hot but I felt cold. I thought it was going to take me away because it was pulling on me so hard."

When this happened, Natividade stooped down, cowering in fear, and squeezed her eyes shut. Her feet never left the ground even though the pull was strong. At no time did she hear any sound. All this happened in seconds, and she began screaming to her son for help.

The encounter ended as abruptly as it started, and by the time Jose got to the door, the object was gone. Natividade was in a state of shock for some time, and it was more than fifteen minutes before she was able to tell Jose what happened.

"My whole body was numb," she said. "I was sick to my stomach, and for about a month I was terribly nervous. Little things would make me jump. Almost anything would startle me."

It was two years later that we interviewed her, and she admitted still being skittish about going outside at night. "I go out only if I have to, and I look around to see if anything can possibly come down."

Natividade's encounter reveals once again the hot- cold phenomenon, plus two new elements, the myriad dots of colored lights dancing on the ground and the feeling of being pressed downward at the same time she felt herself being pulled up. The strange powers of UFOs multiply.

Victim Paralyzed

A year later, early in the evening of September 30, 1991, an encounter occurred that revealed two more ways in which UFOs can exert unusual powers. The victim this time was Vicente Fernandes Filho, who owns an auto parts and repair shop in Santa Cruz.[4]

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Vicente lives in town but had gone to a small farm he owns three to four miles to the southwest. He was sitting in the dark on the veranda of the farmhouse, listening to music on the tape deck in his pickup truck when suddenly everything around the house was lit up.

"I thought it was the headlights of a car, and I looked out toward the highway, but there was no car," he said. "Then the tape deck suddenly stopped and ejected the tape. I stepped down off the veranda and looked up and saw this flying saucer no more than thirty meters above a tree. It was round and as big as a bus."

The tree is about a hundred feet from the house. There was total silence. As Vicente stepped out into the yard, he was hit by a ray of light from the UFO, and he involuntarily froze.

"I felt like I'd gotten an electrical shock," he said. "I was paralyzed, and I felt like something was trying to pull me up. I was terribly afraid. My whole body felt numb, and I thought the world was coming to an end."

Ten seconds later the light turned off. The paralysis and upward pull ceased, and then Vicente could see a number of small, colored lights—red, green, yellow and blue —going on and off in sequence around the object.

A few seconds later, the UFO began to move slowly toward the south, passing over cows that were standing in a field. The spotlight that had paralyzed Vicente came on again and moved about as if searching for something on the ground. It didn't touch the animals, and they showed no reaction to the UFO. The light turned off again, and twice more turned on, both times seeming to search in a random pattern, as the UFO gradually moved out of sight.

Vicente, thirty-three, told us his story a year later in his Santa Cruz auto-parts shop and then took us to his farm to show us where everything happened. He said his legs were

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weak for three days after the incident but he had no other aftereffects.

Interestingly, late one Saturday night in 1978 when he was still single, he and a girlfriend had a similar experience after they had ridden to a nearby reservoir on his motorcycle. At that time, a UFO focused a light on them, he felt paralyzed and the woman fainted. She was unconscious for twenty minutes, and it was an hour before they felt well enough to leave.

In both cases the UFOs exhibited the ability to paralyze a person with a beam of light — as happened to Moises — and in Vicente's 1991 experience, it also was able to cause the tape deck in his pickup to stop playing and eject the tape.

A Noiseless "Tornado"

There is one more case in this "uplifting" category, and it has an unusual twist. It took place about eleven o'clock one night in March 1991 as Jorge Fernando De Sousa, forty-two, was guarding a field of tall grass to keep animals from eating it. The field is on the edge of Lake Apodi and next to the town of Apodi in western Rio Grande do Norte.[5]

"I was sort of nodding off when I noticed this wind whirling around me," Jorge said when we visited Apodi six months after this happened. "It was like a tornado, and it was pulling on me. I was sitting down, and it was trying to take me away. I began crawling and crouching, hanging onto the grass with both hands, trying not to be pulled up and trying to get away. I felt like I was flying but my feet never left the ground."

The grass was swirling, and dirt and debris were blowing around him. Curiously, the wind was both hot and cold.

"I was surprised by the heat," Jorge said. "It was a cold

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wind but I felt hot, and it made no noise. I think it was something very modern because it didn't make any noise."

Then he got an even bigger surprise as the area around him suddenly lit up. "I looked up and saw this big ball of light, sort of bluish-white like a fluorescent light."

The light was round and in the center of a square object about a hundred feet above him. When the light turned on, the wind ceased, and he no longer felt himself being pulled upward.

"The light reminded me of the cab of a big truck," Jorge said. "It was four to five meters wide and round like a drum. The light that came from the center part was brighter than the light around it. There was a noise like a cross between bees and a refrigerator, but very quiet, a humming sound. I was very scared. I thought the light was going to take me away, and I started running.

"His home is on the edge of town four hundred yards away, and he ran all the way with the light following right behind him.

"The light was chasing me, and when I got to my street, it went away rapidly. I've never been so afraid in my life."

When this incident began, Jorge had no light with him, and he wasn't smoking. The UFO spotted him in the dark and created a cold "wind" that felt hot to him and pulled on him as he tried to get away from it. The incident lasted perhaps ten minutes, he thinks, and for much of that time Jorge was fighting the "wind."

His eyes hurt for half an hour but he had no other aftereffects. It was nearly a month before he dared go back out at night again. I talked to him again in July 1993, and although he's still wary, he regularly goes to his field at night.

Next, people who fought the "wind" — and lost.
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1. Say-ah-RAH. This state, on the northern coast just west of Rio Grande do Norte, has been a busy place for UFOs for decades.
2. OOL-vee-oh Brant Uh-LAY-show.
3. NA-chee-vee-DAH-gee.
4. Vee-SEN-chee Fer-NAN-daze FEEL-yo.
5. Ah-poe-GEE.

Chapter Five

THE ‘ANIMAL’ HAS GOT ME!

A more detailed picture of the strange and unusual powers of UFOs is beginning to emerge. First, people feel an unseen force pulling them upward like a magnet. Then a man protecting his grass from animals says a "wind" generated by a UFO tried to lift him off the ground. A tornado or hurricane is certainly powerful enough to do that but this "wind" wasn't either one. Yet, other people say they've also had such a wind pull them into the air.

The first time I heard of such an incident was, ironically, on the same small mountain where Moises was levitated in 1991. In February 1979, on the same day that I interviewed Januncio near Santa Cruz, I also talked to a woman who had soared to lofty heights thanks to this "wind."

Her name is Francisca Bispo De Assis, and she lived at Sitio Timbauba, a few miles north of Campo Redondo. The incident had occurred just twelve days earlier on the night of Saturday, January 27. Her daughter Josefa, then thirteen, was with her at the time.

Francisca was a small, slender woman of forty-five. On the night this happened, she and Josefa had visited some

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neighbors and were walking home about eleven o'clock.

"Eight people were with us," Francisca said. "Then they went another way, and my daughter Josefa and I came this way."

The interpreter and I had walked with Francisca and Josefa down to the bottom of the hill near a big coconut tree which they had just walked past when their encounter began. Francisca then pointed to the top of the hill about three hundred yards away and said: "I saw a big light up there. 'It's the animal!' I shouted to Josefa, and I told her to run."

The path to their home runs diagonally up the hill, and the UFO was about thirty degrees to the left of the path.

"It looked like a star and then it came down toward us," Francisca said. "Then it looked like a ball of fire, and it started getting bigger. It was bright and, as it got closer, it looked like an umbrella when it opens up. It came down close to the ground and shot a beam of light toward us."

Carried in the Air

"Josefa said, 'Mama, let's run!' but by then the animal had caught me in the beam of light. I started to rise off the ground, and Josefa grabbed me and pulled me back down. But I said, 'Go, because the animal's got me! Run and save yourself!' and she ran off.

"As soon as she left me, a big wind suddenly hit me. The wind was coming from the animal, and it started to pull me toward the light. It was like a tornado, and I got very cold. It pulled my dress up around my waist, and my feet were no longer touching the ground."

As Francisca talked, her voice grew louder and became shrill.

"I could see my shadow on the ground. My whole body was in the light, and I was terrified. I felt like I was in a big tornado. All the time the light and the wind were pulling me

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up from the ground. I was about twenty meters above the ground and moving up the hill toward the animal. My whole body was numb. I didn't feel anything. I was crying and scared to death that the animal was taking me away and would never bring me back again."

Francisca became more agitated as she continued talking.

"I moved about forty meters in the air toward the animal, and then the wind stopped and lowered me back down to the ground again. My whole body was tingling. I didn't feel anything else. I was very scared and praying to God to help me.

"The light stayed up there above the hill for a few seconds, just sort of swinging back and forth, and then it went away. I was so frightened, I didn't even see where it went."

Numb for Two Days

Hysterical and afraid "the animal" would come back, Francisca ran to her darkened house, where Josefa and the rest of her family had been watching from a window, afraid to go outside to help her.

Francisca said her body was numb for two days, and she'd had severe headaches every day since the incident. She was nervous and afraid the UFO was going to come back.

Francisca experienced the hot-cold sensation reported in earlier chapters, but with a curious difference.

"The light was hot even though the wind was blowing all the time," she said. "But I was cold from my hips up and hot from the hips down." This was at the time the wind had blown her skirt up around her waist.

The beam of light from the UFO had no effect on her daughter.

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"I didn't feel anything," Josefa said. "I grabbed Mama's arm and pulled her down but I didn't feel anything. I thought it was going to take her away."

Throughout the interview, Francisca referred to the UFO as *o bicho*, which has several interpretations but her meaning was "the Animal."

A Selective Force

Francisca and Josefa were not carrying a light of any kind, and the UFO had spotted them in the darkness from at least a thousand feet away. The UFO itself started out looking like a small star but quickly became a "ball of fire"— probably the most common description of a UFO that I've heard in Brazil—that grew in size and moved toward them. As it got closer, its shape became more like an open umbrella. At least that was Francisca's perception of it.

A ray of light shined down at them, and Francisca felt it pulling her off the ground. Curiously, it had no effect on Josefa, who pulled her mother back down. But Francisca was still caught in its grip, and Josefa fled.

Francisca was then caught up in a fierce "wind," which drew her into the air toward the UFO, with a pull that was even stronger than the light. Francisca likened it to a tornado which blew her skirt up around her waist but, oddly, didn't affect anything around her. No twigs, leaves, dirt or debris were blown about, just Francisca and her skirt.

While she was airborne, she felt a tingling sensation throughout her body and was cold from the waist up and hot from there down. Then the UFO aliens apparently decided they'd accomplished whatever mission they had and lowered her to the ground.

Fortunately for Francisca, they let her down gently. A fall of sixty-five feet could have killed her. Was this compassion? Moises was let down easily the first time, but

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the second time, he dropped to the ground with a thump. Compassion, though, is a human concept and these aliens are not human beings. Besides, if they had any compassion, they would never have bothered Francisca in the first place.

Whenever possible, I go back and talk to people like Januncio and Francisca to see whether their encounters had any long-lasting effects. In September 1992, I returned to Sitio Timbauba, hoping to talk to her again, but neighbors said she had moved to Natal, a hundred miles away, some years before. However, they said she had never suffered any serious problems because of "the animal."

When Francisca ran home that night in 1979, she got one last look at the light. It was swinging back and forth in an arc at the top of the hill — much as the UFO did after levitating Moises on the same hill a dozen years later.

The beam of light that pulled Francisca off the ground was a selective force that affected only her and not Josefa, who was walking just in front of her. Josefa was able to pull her mother back down the first time, but Francisca was still in the grip of the unseen force. Josefa *still* wasn't affected, even though she had her hand on her mother's arm. Francisca then did what any mother would do -- she told her daughter to run and save herself.

Truthful or Excellent Actress?

Science-fiction writers are fond of force fields, and perhaps that is what this "wind" was, if force fields can be created and moved about as we wish. But there are no such things in the world as we know it. Certainly such a tool or weapon would have been used by now in warfare, fighting criminals, rescuing hostages, kidnapping people, breaking friends out of jail, playing pranks and in dozens of other uses.

Some people would argue that Francisca was highly emotional and made up the story. If so, she was also an

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excellent actress because she was nearly hysterical by the time she finished telling us her story. Besides, what did she have to gain? It certainly wasn't for the publicity. No one in her right mind runs out and shouts, "I've just been attacked by a UFO" just to get attention.

So far as we know, no other investigator has ever talked to Francisca about her experience. She didn't know we were coming, nor did we until earlier that day, when we first heard about her experience. So, it's highly unlikely that she concocted the story hoping that someday a UFO investigator would seek her out.

Francisca was a simple, farm woman, poorly educated and unsophisticated. She was very believable. Also, this happened just three weeks after Januncio had his experience and in the same area at a time when many people in the region reported seeing UFOs.

It's difficult to describe the intensity and emotions of people like Januncio, Francisca and so many others as they tell what happened to them. You look them in the eye, and they don't look away. You go back and forth over their stories, asking them to "clarify" certain points when you're really looking for discrepancies. But you don't find any. You ask trick questions, trying to trip them up. But they don't trip, and eventually you realize there's no doubt in their minds that they're telling the truth.

What makes their reports so much more convincing is that other people elsewhere who know nothing about the experiences of such people as Francisca say much the same thing has happened to them -- such as the mother in the next chapter. She was also levitated -- along with her daughter and their dog, all three at the same time.

Chapter Six

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IT'S COMING AFTER US!

Francisca's story puzzled me for years. Hers was the first levitation I'd ever heard of and I had trouble visualizing her being carried kicking and screaming through the air toward a UFO. The only thing that came to mind was a scene from the movie *The Wizard of* Oz when the Wicked Witch of the West goes flying through the sky on her broomstick. That, of course, was far from the truth. What happened to Francisca wasn't fantasy, and it wasn't until I talked to others who'd had similar experiences that I began to understand what she had to endure.

Francisca's encounter was unique to me for about a dozen years. Then in September 1991, I talked to a man who also said he'd been carried through the air. Then in 1992, Moises told of having been swept off his feet by a UFO, and a few days later, a woman related a similar story. Neither incident was known outside of their neighborhoods, and Cynthia Luce and I stumbled on both quite by accident. It makes you wonder how many more incidents like these have occurred.

The second woman was subjected to an assault that was just as bizarre as those involving Moises and Francisca. She is a housewife who was lifted off the ground along with a teenage daughter and their pet dog (no, he wasn't named Toto).

Serendipity sometimes seems to play a part in field investigations. More than once I've stopped a stranger to ask about someone, and the stranger turned out to be the person I wanted to talk to or was a relative. Or a rumored encounter may fizzle out but lead to another strange incident that no one ever heard of. That's the way it was with this woman.

In September 1992, toward the end of a ten-day trip through Rio Grande do Norte, Cynthia and I were driving back to the capital city of Natal on the northeastern coast to

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turn in our rental car and fly to Rio de Janeiro. About thirty miles from Natal, we decided to go a little out of our way to visit the town of Bom Jesus.[1] A week earlier we'd heard about a man who lived there who supposedly had been taken away by a UFO for fifteen days. It was a vague report without much promise but we were ahead of schedule, so we detoured to Bom Jesus.

Like a Rainbow

At the town's police station, we checked with Detective Alberto Ferreira Da Silva who, we'd been told, knew the man. Da Silva said the fellow had moved away but he knew of a woman, Maria Dos Dores Lopes, who had been pulled into the air by a UFO along with her daughter and dog. She was a neighbor of Da Silva's and he took us to her home.

Maria is a small, mild-mannered woman of forty- seven. She said what happened to her was the most frightening experience of her life.

"It was right here, out in front of this house," she said. "My two daughters and I went outside one night to take our dog for a walk before putting him in the kennel for the night. It was about ten o'clock."

The daughters are Marileide, then fifteen, and Maria DaGuia, thirteen.[2] Their dog was a big, black mongrel called Doggie.

"We were out in the front yard, about fifteen meters from the house, and I saw what I thought was a light in the sky. I was watching it, and I thought it was very beautiful. It was like a rainbow. Then my younger daughter screamed, 'It's coming down! It's coming down! Let's go!' and I said, 'No, it's not coming down.'

"But I was wrong. It WAS coming down, and very quickly. It was a very intense white light shaped like a big tub, and when it came down, it looked like a fishing net. The

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light lit up the ground all around us."

Cold Wind All Around

The younger daughter, Maria DaGuia, was closer to the house than the others and was able to run inside. But her mother and sister and the dog were "captured" by the light coming from the UFO, and they found themselves pulled into the air.

"I felt this cold wind all around me, pulling all three of us up," Maria said. "I couldn't touch the ground. I was off the ground. When I tried to lift my leg, I felt a cold wind like when someone opens a refrigerator. We were about a meter off the ground. I was wearing a very large skirt, and the wind filled it with air, blowing it up around me."

It was a moment of terror for all three. The mother and daughter were both screaming but the dog, almost paralyzed with fright, made no sound, not even a whimper.

"I was yelling for them to run but they couldn't run," Maria said. "I had one hand on Marileide's arm and the dog's leash wrapped around the other. He was close to me. I tried to push Marileide away toward the house, but I couldn't.

"At the same time I was trying to run but my feet weren't touching anything. I was running in the air. Marileide couldn't run either, and she was crying. The dog was cowering. I wasn't able to do anything. I tried to look up at the thing and could see it was spinning, but I was very afraid. The wind was like a hurricane, going in circles."

The episode ended as abruptly as it began. "The fishing net suddenly went straight up into the sky," Maria said.

As the light moved swiftly away, the cold wind stopped, and all three dropped to the ground rather hard. Maria and Marileide landed in a squatting position facing the house, but neither was able to stand up or say anything. Shocked and trembling with fright, they began crawling toward the house.

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The dog crawled alongside them with his belly scraping the ground, his ears bent down and his tail between his legs.

In the meantime, Maria DaGuia had told her father Luis, who had been lying down on a sofa, what was happening outside. He jumped up, but by the time he got to the front door, the UFO had vanished. All he saw was his wife and daughter and the dog crawling toward him.

Cried for a Long Time

Once they got inside, neither Maria nor Marileide could speak for a half hour.

That happened in September 1983 but Maria's memories of it are still vivid. She doesn't know whether the cold wind blew any dust or debris around. The light was so bright she couldn't see anything very clearly, nor does she remember feeling anything other than cold air swirling around them.

Maria Dos Dores Lopes told us this story in September 1992. I went back to Bom Jesus in July 1993, and she repeated the story in virtually identical detail. Only one thing was new this time.

"After it was over," she said, "I sat in a chair for a long time. I couldn't talk. My husband kept asking me questions but I couldn't speak. I heard everything he said, and I could see everything, but I couldn't talk. Some time later I began to cry, and I cried for a long time. And then I began to talk."

It was five months before she got up enough courage to go outside again at night. Marileide also was afraid to go outside, but recovered more quickly than her mother. Neither had any other aftereffects, nor did the dog. He died several years later when he was hit by a car.

What is significant about this case is that more than one person was affected. Two human beings and an animal were levitated at the same time, and they felt a strong cold

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wind blowing all around them when they were pulled up.

Also noteworthy is the fact that Maria described the light as it came swiftly down toward them as looking like "fishing net." She called it a *tarrafa,* which is a circular net that fishermen cast in shallow waters.[3] Alfredo Marques Soares used the same term when he was crippled by a beam of light from a UFO far to the west in Ceara in 1977, and Beato had seen much the same thing when he resisted a UFO's attempt to pull him into the craft near Santa Cruz forty miles southwest of Bom Jesus in 1979. Witnesses in several other cases have described the fishing net, and this aspect of the UFO phenomenon will be discussed in more detail later.

Maria said the brilliant light was shaped like a big tub when it first came down. Francisca Bispo De Assis, who was pulled into the air at Sitio Timbauba sixty to seventy miles to the west in 1979, said the light she saw looked like an open umbrella. It's possible the two women were describing much the same thing, since a tub and an open umbrella could have similar shapes.

Both women said the wind was cold and swirling around. Francisca said it was like a tornado; Maria said it was like a hurricane. Jorge Fernando De Sousa, who resisted a cold wind trying to pull him off the ground in a field near Apodi in 1991, said that what he felt was like a tornado.

Maria couldn't tell the precise shape of the object because the light was so bright, but she could see it was spinning around above her -- just as Moises had seen when he was levitated.

One other interesting note in the Bom Jesus case is that neither Maria nor her daughter suffered any aftereffects, other than being unable to speak for half an hour. The whole episode probably lasted less than a minute, just long enough for the younger daughter to run inside and arouse her father, and the exposure to any emissions from the UFO may have

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been too brief to have any affect.

Most of the incidents described so far took place in the Northeast. But UFOs have been active throughout Brazil. More than a thousand miles to the south, in the state of Minas Gerais, an incident occurred that was quite similar to Maria's and Francisca's. This one involved a young farmer who was lucky to have his wife with him at the time.

1. BAWN Jay-zoo-EES. This means Good Jesus.
2. Mar-ee-LAY-gee and Ma-REE-uh DA-GHEE-uh, with a hard G.
3. Tuh-HAF-fuh.

Chapter Seven

SOMETHING TOUCHED ME

Geraldo Gomes might not be around today if his wife Angela hadn't pulled him back down to earth when he was snatched off the ground by something mysterious. That's her opinion, anyway, but he's not so sure.

Geraldo was a healthy farmer of thirty at the time, but the experience left him in such ill health that it took a year for him to recover. Now, more than a dozen years later, he still suffers from severe headaches almost every day.

He and Angela live on a farm in the Valley of the Old Women in central Brazil. On the night this happened, they had visited some friends with his brother and sister-in- law, Jose and Eliana Gomes, and at about ten o'clock, the four drove home in Jose's car. Geraldo and Angela got out about a half mile from their home to walk the rest of the way, and Jose and Eliana continued on in another direction toward their own house. The night was dark.

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When Geraldo and Angela got within two to three hundred yards of home, they discovered they weren't alone.

"We were coming down the hill, and suddenly a big light lit up everything behind us," Geraldo said. "I looked over my shoulder and saw a bright light three hundred to four hundred meters away. It was bluish-white, like the color from an electric soldering iron. It was bright enough that we could see where we were walking. The light was coming out of a hole in something dark but I couldn't tell the shape or color of the object itself because the light was so bright. All I saw was a dark form.

"We continued walking, and I looked back again, and the object was suddenly very close, only twenty to thirty meters away. It got to us in no time. It was about the size of a minibus. I heard a sound like a refrigerator motor. Angela said later that she heard a sound like a car door being slammed. And then it was right on top of us. I was hot. I felt like I was near a fire. It made me sweat and my clothes were wet."

Off the Ground

"The light went out, and I felt something soft touching my shoulder, but I couldn't see what it was. I reached back, and it felt like a soft towel, and suddenly my feet were suspended above the ground. I tried to push the thing away, but I was lifted up about seventy centimeters[1] above the ground and was carried for about ten meters. Angela saw I was being taken away. She panicked and grabbed me and pulled me back down."

Both of them began screaming for help even though Angela wasn't sure what was happening. "It looked like he was dancing in the air," she said. "I was very afraid."

She grabbed Geraldo and pulled him back down, and the UFO immediately moved back in the direction it had come from. A few seconds later the light came on again
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about a hundred yards away and sat motionless just above some dense bushes. It was all too much for Angela.

"She was screaming her head off, and then she fainted," Geraldo said. He picked her up and began carrying her, but she quickly revived and both began running.

Chest Pains

"When we got to the bottom of the hill the object came back close to us again," Geraldo said. "We were both screaming, and my relatives saw it. My father-in-law came out of the house with a light to help us, and then the object went away for good."

From start to finish, the incident lasted about four minutes. It took Angela, then twenty-nine, two hours to recover from her fright. She was hoarse from screaming but had no other physical effects. For Geraldo, though, it was a different story.

"I felt terrible for nearly a year," he said. "I had chest pains and insomnia. I slept very badly. I went to see a doctor, but he couldn't find anything wrong. I've had headaches every day since this happened. I still can't concentrate my vision on anything too long because I get severe headaches. I couldn't drive for a long time because of my eye problems.

"It was three years before I would go out at night again. Angela is still convinced that if I had been alone that night, I would've been taken away, but I don't agree."

His brother and sister-in-law didn't see what happened nor did they see the light, but they had troubles of their own.

"A few minutes after we let them off, the car suddenly stopped," said Eliana, who stood listening as Geraldo and Angela told us their story under a tree near their house. "The car wouldn't start. The battery just went dead, and it was a new battery. We pushed the car until it could roll down a hill,

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and then it started."

Angela had kept a record of the incident, which took place on another farm in the area where they lived at the time. She went into the house, came back a minute later and said it happened on the night of November 1, 1983. She said that she and Geraldo saw the same UFO or perhaps other UFOs a number of times after that.

"Every time we stuck our noses out the door, it seemed to be waiting for us, and there would be a big light over the place," Angela said. "We didn't have electricity at that time. Everybody around saw the light a lot both before and after our experience."

Active UFO Area

Electricity came to the area in 1989 and fewer sightings have been reported since then. The Valley of the Old Women is an area of about four thousand square miles surrounded by low mountains. The southern part of it is about an hour's drive north of Belo Horizonte in the state of Minas Gerais. It includes all or part of ten municipalities, which in the United States would correspond to counties.

UFOs have been seen in this region for decades, and from the late 1960s into the 1980s, it was probably one of the most active UFO areas in the world. Sightings and encounters still occur there, but not as frequently as before.

For more than twenty years, Hulvio Aleixo and members of a Belo Horizonte UFO organization spent nearly every other weekend in the valley, investigating hundreds of cases.[2] Since the 1980s, they have gone there less frequently. Even with all those years of investigations, Hulvio is still discovering incidents, and Geraldo and Angela's encounter was new to him when we accompanied him on a field trip to the valley in September 1991.

Geraldo's experience is significant not only because he

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was picked up and carried for a distance. Although he is able to work, it left him in poorer health, possibly permanently. The damage could have been psychological or physical, such as nerve injury, but he still suffers from severe headaches, and his vision has been impaired since then.

He also had chest pains for nearly a year after. The same symptoms were reported by a man in another case, to be related later, whose health was so affected that he has never been able to work again.

The four cases involving Geraldo, Moises, Francisca, and Maria with her daughter, Marileide, and their pet dog show beyond question that UFOs are able to pull a person into the air, usually with a beam of light or in combination with some kind of wind that it creates. Geraldo, however, felt no wind nor was he exposed to a ray of light. He was lifted up and carried along in complete darkness. He did feel a lot of heat coming from whatever had control of him.

UFOs also apparently target their victims. Geraldo was taken up but Angela wasn't, even though they were walking side by side. Francisca was pulled up but her daughter, Josefa, wasn't. On the other hand, Maria, Marileide and the dog got the group package.

It's true that some people, such as Januncio and Beato, are able to resist by grabbing a tree, a fence or a lamp post, but sometimes it makes you wonder if the UFOs weren't simply toying with them for purposes that we cannot understand. Other cases yet to be reviewed indicate that when the UFO aliens are determined to take someone away, they can do so with ease.

UFOs appear to be advanced craft with a technology that to us seems like magic, appearing swiftly, hovering silently, vanishing in an instant, picking people up, carrying them through the air, lowering them gently or slamming them down, creating strong swirling "winds" as well as heat

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and cold at the same time, simultaneously pushing and pulling people and, as we will see, taking people away to strange lands.

In spite of all that, however, they can also act in what to us are crude or primitive ways, as we will see next.

1. About two and a third feet.
2. CICOANI or Centro de Investigacao Civil dos Objetos Aereos Nao Indentificados (Center for the Civilian Investigation of Unidentified Aerial Objects), which Hulvio founded and still heads.

Chapter Eight

UFO BAIT

One of the problems in trying to come to grips with the UFO phenomenon is that it is extraordinarily complex. Every time I thought I had a tiny part of it figured out, something new and often contradictory came to light and I found myself as far away from the answers as ever.

Nearly everybody who accepts the reality of UFOs "knows" or assumes they're technologically advanced vehicles manned by aliens from superior civilizations that inhabit other worlds. I believed that myself at one time and still do, sort of. This is why I was surprised when I first learned that flying saucers crews act in a primitive manner at times.

Dropping hot liquid on Januncio and Beato to make them let go of the tree or bush was crude. If these people have the technology to come here from other worlds, they certainly shouldn't be thwarted by humans willing to endure pain and anguish to avoid being captured.

For crudeness, though, nothing compares with what the aliens did when they snatched them off the ground with

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hooks at the ends of cables suspended from the saucers. This happened to two men, one forty and the other seventy- six. Both survived, but the old man's life was ruined, and he never strayed far from home the rest of his life, rarely even going outside again.

The younger man is Hermelindo Da Silva. He is a farmer who owns a small roadside bar just outside the village of Vargem Grande in the Valley of the Old Women, the same valley where Geraldo and Angela had their uplifting encounter. Hermelindo lived with his wife and six children and his wife's brother in a house about seventy yards behind the bar.[1]

Four Cables Come Down

At two o'clock on the morning of September 9, 1976, Hermelindo was walking home from the village with his dog, apparently a rather pugnacious animal. As they got near the bar, which had been locked up for the night several hours earlier, the sky suddenly lit up as bright as day. It was unnerving for both man and dog, for just above them was an intensely bright object about ten feet in diameter, surrounded by yellow and violet hues. It had a dark hole in the bottom.

"I was really frightened," Hermelindo said. "The dog was fierce but he got some kind of shock, and he ran away in terror."

Then the light went out. Hermelindo thought it had gone away, and he ran around to the back door of the bar and tried to unlock it. But he was too nervous and had to stand in the doorway under the overhanging roof. He strained to see what was up there but couldn't detect anything.

"Then the light suddenly flashed on again," he said. "It was up there just above the roof, and it blinded me. I grabbed a pole, thrust it up and hit something solid. I got a
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slight shock. Then the light turned off again."

The UFO had been making a faint buzzing sound, but when the light turned off, the buzzing stopped, and Hermelindo then heard a hissing like the noise of a small gaslight.

Then something hit his shoulder and knocked him to the ground. Now panic-stricken, he jumped up and started to race toward his house, but the light suddenly came on again about twenty-five feet above him. At this point something even stranger happened.

"They dropped four steel cables down with hooks on them and tried to catch me with them," he said. "I was dodging the hooks, and then a little creature came sliding down one of the cables. He hit me on the shoulder and tried to grab me, but I hit him and fought with him."

The creature moved like a live being and looked like a man. It was about four feet tall and completely covered with something gray that was hard and polished. The face was never visible. Hermelindo, who is six feet tall and strong, wasn't able to get a grip on the "clothing" but did grab the creature in a bear hug.

"He felt like metal. I tried to throw him to the ground, but when I did, he shuddered. It scared me so much that I let go of him, and he fell to the ground."

Before Hermelindo could move, however, the creature swiftly slipped a hook around Hermelindo's left ankle and scurried back up one of the cables into the UFO. Hermelindo fell down but was immediately yanked off the ground and began to be reeled up toward the hole in the bottom of the UFO, feet first.

"The ship was the size of this room," he said as we talked in his little bar, which was about twelve feet square. "The hole was open, and it was purple. They tried to pull me up through that hole, and when I got near the bottom I felt

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terribly hot."

The UFO had begun moving at the same time it was hauling Hermelindo up, going in the direction of his house. Hermelindo had been screaming for help throughout the ordeal and had awakened his brother-in-law, who had come to a window and was watching the struggle. As Hermelindo was being pulled upside down, his right leg was swinging wildly and this is what saved him.

"My right foot hit the edge of the hole, jarring the hook loose from my ankle and I fell to the ground," he said.

Cuts and Scratches

The UFO kept going and disappeared, but Hermelindo's misfortune continued as he fell about twenty feet into a large yucca plant, which has tough, razor-sharp leaves like large butcher knives. He suffered a number of cuts and scratches. Once he extricated himself from the plant, he ran to the house and kicked the door open, breaking the lock. He spent the rest of the night telling and re-telling his story to his wife and brother-in-law.

"He came in all hurt," Hermelindo's wife, Maria, told us in 1991. "He was very upset. He had cuts on his knee, arms and body, his wrist, forehead and face. He was complaining a lot about his left leg. His left foot was swollen, and his knee was bruised. He complained of a burning sensation in his left foot. He went to sleep babbling about what happened."

The next day Hermelindo went to a pharmacy and was given some ointment for his cuts and scrapes.

In Belo Horizonte, Hulvio Aleixo soon heard about the incident from one of his informants and immediately went to Vargem Grande. Hermelindo's case, Hulvio says, is one of the most unusual of the more than three hundred close encounters he's investigated in the Valley of the Old Women.

"When we interviewed the pharmacist, he confirmed

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that Hermelindo was very nervous and shocked but that he had no apparent symptoms of burns, just edema," Hulvio said when he first told us about the case in 1986. He took us to Hermelindo's home in September 1991 so we could hear the story from Hermelindo himself.

"When Hermelindo fell from the hook," Hulvio said, "his brother-in-law had opened the window and saw the whole object, not just the bottom as Hermelindo had. He said it was conical in shape but with a round top, a bell shaped UFO. Hermelindo had seen only the bottom of the UFO."

The dog may have been a victim of the encounter. He died three months later of unknown causes, and Hermelindo believes the UFO in some way caused the dog to die.

Tearful Experience

The second hook experience, involving an old man named Antonio Amador De Lima, is only a little less dramatic. Antonio didn't fight with anyone, but what one of the UFO crew members said to him was so frightening that tears came to his eyes when he told me his story.

Antonio lived in the small northeastern town of Santo Antonio fifty miles southeast of Santa Cruz, where Januncio and Beato had their encounters. Antonio had worked as a farmer every day of his life, and although he was seventy-six, he was just finishing a long day at work when this happened. It was a Saturday evening in November 1979. He was putting in some plants on a farm a half mile west of town and was worried about an infestation of ants.

"It was seven o'clock, dark, and I saw a light flying toward me," he said when I talked to him in January 1980. Rogerio Freitas, then a university student in Natal and the first researcher to investigate this case, was interpreting for us.

"The light frightened me because I had heard about

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flying saucers, and when I saw it, I began to walk toward home," Antonio said. "But after I'd gone a few meters, the object shined a light down on me. I had heard that if a flying saucer came near, the best thing to do was to lie down on the ground. So I lay down on my left side.

"The light came down close to me, and suddenly I found myself pulled up off the ground about fifty centimeters.[2] I grabbed a plant with my left hand and hung on tight to keep from going up any farther, and I raised my right arm above me to protect me from the thing.

"I twisted around and could see something like a rope had come down from the UFO, and it had four hooks at the end. One of the hooks had caught hold of the back of my shirt, and I was hanging down from the hook."

Take Him or Leave Him?

"I saw a window and could see people sitting down and moving their legs, two women and a man. They looked like us but they weren't Brazilians. The faces of the women were strange, kind of ugly. Their hair was short and black. At first I could see only the legs of the man, but later I could see a beard. The women were wearing blouses with straps and no sleeves. Their arms were yellow. I could see them sitting down and moving their legs."

Tears came to his eyes, and he stopped, unable to talk for a moment. We were in the living room of the family home that Antonio, widowed for seven months, shared with his daughter and son-in-law and granddaughter. The room was crowded with people who had materialized from nowhere to listen to the interview.

After a moment, Antonio continued. "I heard one of the women say, 'Here is a good old man we can take with us to our earth.' I was very frightened."

From where he hung, the object appeared to be cigar-

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shaped and fifteen to twenty feet above him. Antonio never shouted for help.

"I was afraid that if I did, the object would take me away," he said. "I was crying, but I didn't shout for anybody. I held onto the plant all that time. After about fifteen minutes, my shirt tore and I fell down to the ground. "I saw the object spin around three or four times and then go away. It was brown, about twice as big as a car, and as it went away, I could see a little red light in the back."

When the object flew off, Antonio ran home.

"It was a very strange sensation," he said. "I couldn't feel anything in my legs. I was very afraid. Afterwards I was sick for a week. I stopped working after that because I didn't want to get back home after dark."

Antonio wouldn't go outside after dark anymore. "I'm afraid the flying saucer will come back," he explained quietly-

Twelve years later, in August 1992, I returned to Santo Antonio with Cynthia Luce and learned that Antonio had died five years after the incident, in February 1985.

"He never went back to work again," his granddaughter, Maria Pontes, told us. "He aged quickly and became much older looking. He started having heart trouble, his legs were swollen and his hands shook.

"He was a strong man who worked very hard. Before this happened, he'd get up at three in the morning, go to work, come back home between seven and eight at night, eat his dinner, watch a little bit of television and then go to bed. But after this he didn't work one day more."

Personality Changed

Maria, who teaches adults to read and write, was a teenager when Antonio had his encounter. "He arrived home at eight-thirty that night," she said. "I wasn't here but came in a little later. I said to him, 'The people are saying in the

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street that a flying saucer came to take you away.' And he told us the story.

"A few days after this happened, he took to his bed. He stayed in his room in his hammock and got up only once in a while. He never went out. He always had a good appetite and ate heartily before, but after this happened he ate just a little."

Antonio's personality also changed somewhat, Maria said, explaining: "He was always somewhat picky. Things always had to be more or less his way, and he got irritable if they weren't. But after this he got very difficult. Everything had to be exactly the way he wanted, and sometimes he'd get so angry that he wouldn't speak the rest of the day.

"He didn't like to talk about what happened to him. He had never believed in anything to do with flying saucers, but after this he started believing."

Maria remembers a slightly different version of what happened to him than what he said during my interview with him in 1980.

"He saw four people inside this flying saucer," she said. "Two women and two men. He knew their sex by their voices. He said the light was so bright you could find a hair on the ground. He heard them say, 'He's very old. He's no use. Let's leave him.' "

So the tears in Antonio's eyes when he talked with Rogerio Freitas and me may have been tears of relief rather than fear of being taken away. Either way, it was a traumatic experience for him.

Hermelindo got hooked by a UFO near his place of business, called the Bar Santo Antonio, and Antonio was hooked near the town of Santo Antonio. Some UFO buffs would see some significance in that, but Santo Antonio is a common name in Brazil and the coincidence is most likely only accidental.

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What isn't a coincidence is that both men were terrorized, Antonio so much that he was afraid to ever leave his house again. Hermelindo recovered nicely and, now in his late fifties, is a healthy and vigorous man, no longer worried about UFOs attacking him again.

Hermelindo was scratched and cut when he fell into the yucca plant, but maybe that saved his life. Had he fallen twenty to twenty-five feet directly to the ground, he could have broken his neck. As it was, the yucca plant broke his fall.

For Antonio, though, the encounter virtually ruined his life, turning him into a testy old recluse who spent most of the last five years of his life lying in his hammock.

The odd thing about these two cases is that UFOs don't need to use grappling hooks to snag someone. They're able to easily abduct anyone they choose, without hooks.

One thing seems definite about the UFO phenomenon. It is a very deceptive one, and perhaps these two hook incidents were part of some sort of charade, a mean-spirited one.

Not all victims are as helpless as Hermelindo and Antonio when a UFO picks on them. Some people, as we soon see, have been able to thwart their antagonists by doing something as simple as running and hiding.

1. Air-muh-LEEN-do.
2. About twenty inches.

PART TWO

HIDE AND SEEK

Chapter Nine

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SUDDEN DAYLIGHT

Imagine that you're walking across a hill or fishing in the dark of night. Suddenly, without any warning, a brilliant light turns above you, menacingly silent, making everything for a large area around you as bright as daylight. It's terrifying. What do you do?

You could click your heels three times and say, "There's no place like home." You could also just stand there and admire the light. But you'd probably be better off running and trying to find a place to hide. Almost any place will do, a house, a tree, a bush, whatever gives you cover. A great many people in Brazil have been confronted by such a light, and most of those that I've talked to tried to hide under the nearest tree. Two men even hid under a donkey.

This sudden, swift light in the night sky — I call it a "Sudden Daylight" experience -- is one of the most common encounters I've heard of in Brazil. It happened twice to a man named Manoel Guilherme, who hid under a tree both times, and his story is typical of what people face in situations like this.[1]

Manoel is a small, thin man of fifty who was using a trowel to shape concrete bunks underneath a rodeo grandstand in Santo Antonio, Rio Grande do Norte, as he told his story.

"I was fishing with a friend one night when we saw a light in the sky that was almost red," he said. "We looked at it, and my friend yelled, 'Here comes the "fire"! We'd better run. It's going to get us!'

"We jumped out of the boat and ran for the trees. The light came down and chased us. When we got under the trees, the light stopped over us and changed color from red to white. It was about five meters around and wasn't making any noise. We were very afraid. We waited there a long time,

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I don't know how long. Then the thing went away."

That occurred in October 1991. It frightened Manoel, but he continued to fish at night, and virtually the same thing occurred again two months later. He was fishing with two other men on the bank of a reservoir, again at night, but this time he wasn't as lucky.

"We saw a light in the sky like a star, and I said, 'This happened to me before.' We looked at it a few seconds more and I said, 'Yes, that's just like the one that came after me.' We dropped our fishing poles and ran under a tree."

Waiting for Them

However, the light disappeared, so they started to fish again, but minutes later a red fireball suddenly appeared only forty yards above them.

"It was a beautiful red," Manoel said. "Then it went out, just blinked out. We were very scared and ran to the tree again."

The UFO quickly reappeared over the tree, and this time he and his two friends had to stay under the tree the rest of the night.

"Every time we started to go out from underneath the tree, the object would circle around and shine a red light down on us," Manoel said. "We'd go back under the tree and the light would go out. It was like the thing was playing with us. It disappeared about four-thirty in the morning."

That was enough for Manoel. "I don't fish at night anymore now," he said. "I go out at night but I don't go fishing."

His reaction is not uncommon, although most people eventually get over their fears and go back outside at night. Not all do, though. Sometimes a man can be so terrorized by a UFO that he's spooked for life.

Such a man is Francisco Da Conceicao, who's known as

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Chico Gama.[2] The nickname fits him. He's a thin, little fellow with a fretful look and blinking eyes who lives in Pecem, a small town on the Atlantic coast in Ceara. Jose Jean Alencar, a lawyer and veteran UFO researcher from Fortaleza who first investigated the case, took me to see Chico Gama in September 1986. Chico Gama was then fifty-two. He's a laborer and for years had fished at night to help feed his family.

At two o'clock one morning in February 1981 he was fishing by himself at an isolated beach east of Pecem.

"Suddenly I felt a strange beam of light on my back," Chico Gama said as Jean interpreted. "I looked up and saw a violet-colored object with a red light, and I felt very cold, the way I feel when I open an icebox. I was very afraid, and I ran across the beach and hid under some coconut trees.

The object chased me and stopped over the trees. Then it shined a light down on me, trying to get me."

For the next three hours the UFO played a cruel game with him. Every five minutes or so it would shine the red light down at his hiding place.

"Every time the light hit me, I would feel very cold and dizzy, almost to the point of passing out," Chico Gama said. "It made a strange humming sound every time. This happened many times. When daylight came, it went away. I ran home and hid under my bed. I was very sick, very weak. For several days I felt that way."

Dreams About the UFO

The next day the skin on his arms and back were red as if he'd been sunburned, and two days later, it began to peel off. He also perspired heavily for about a month. These conditions, however, were minor compared to the emotional effects.

"He's very nervous, very fearful, even now," Francisca,

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one of his grown daughters, told us. "He refuses to go anywhere alone because he's very scared to be by himself, even in the daytime. Sometimes he still hides under the bed."

This was not a senile old man hiding under his bed. Chico Gama was only forty-seven when it happened, and he still has nightmares about it. "Sometimes I dream about the UFO," he said quietly. "I don't fish at night anymore."

The UFO's actions seem sadistic, zapping Chico Gama countless times for three hours with a light that left him cold and dizzy almost to the point of losing consciousness. It's like a vicious person tormenting a helpless animal that can't get away. Chico Gama had to stay where he was, hoping the lavender-colored object would go away and leave him alone. It was trying to get him, and who knows what would have happened if it had.

It's easy to understand Chico Gama's dread. He's afraid the UFO or others like it are still out there, waiting for him. Who's to say he's not right?

Fish constitute a big part of everyone's diet in Brazil, especially the poor people. All they need is a pole, and the fish are there for the taking, but when you can't fish anymore or you're afraid to, it can have a big impact on your life.

This is true in the Amazon as well. Some fishermen I met there were so in dread of the UFOs — and the possibly deadlier risks in running from them in the dark — that they were too afraid to fish at night anymore.

In July 1981, I went into the Amazon to try to verify a report that two men fishing in a boat had been killed by a UFO when it shined a light on them. I'd also heard that in the same area a UFO had killed two horses and removed their blood, leaving large needles stuck in them. These incidents supposedly had occurred somewhere west of Santarem, more than eight hundred miles from the mouth of the Amazon.

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I spent three days in the area between Santarem and the smaller city of Obidos, a hundred miles to the west, traveling at times by small plane, a forty-foot boat with a cabin and covered deck, and a small aluminum skiff with an outboard motor on it.

The Amazon River is up to a mile wide in much of that area, and sometimes all you can see is water. As mighty as it is, it must get truly awesome during the rainy season. Once as our cabin boat moved slowly upriver, my companions and I could see water lines thirty feet above us on the banks, meaning everything as far as we could see in all directions had been under thirty more feet of water when rains fell around the clock. We were there in the dry season, when it rains only an hour or so each afternoon.

Also astonishing because of its size is the Tapajos river, which flows into the Amazon at Santarem. It is ten miles wide just before it reaches Santarem. It is so broad that on our first day in the area we flew across the Tapajos to reach Vila Franca, a village on the other side where the two men allegedly died, and our pilot climbed thousands of feet so that we could glide down to the other shore in case the engine conked out. It didn't, although it did blow up four days later — fortunately while the plane was on the ground and the pilot was testing the engine after making some repairs.

Phantom Witness

Once we got safely across the other side of the Tapajos, though, we circled the village of Vila Franca and couldn't find any place to land, not for miles around, no airstrip, no open field, no road, not even a wagon path.

So we flew on to Obidos, where the report about the two dead horses had originated.[3] It had come from a physician who had treated a woman who owned the horses. He told us she had come to see him and was distraught

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because the night before, she'd seen the UFO hovering over her pasture and the next morning found her animals dead.

The woman lived somewhere across the river, back toward Santarem. Our plane, a Cessna 182, would be no help in finding her because there would be no place to land, but the doctor knew a man who had an aluminum skiff with an outboard engine.

We made a deal with the boat owner, and in the next three hours, Uyrange Hollanda and I and the owner skimmed across a lot of water, going far downriver, stopping to ask questions at settlements, houses and any place we saw someone on the bank.[4] We even stopped other boats, but no one knew where the woman lived. Dolphins sometimes leaped out of the water and accompanied us, but if they knew anything, they weren't saying.

All we got was a sunburn, although back in Obidos we did meet people who'd seen UFOs, "routine" incidents that we didn't have time to look into further. We were still hunting for the dead men and dead horses.

The next day we hired the bigger but slower motor vessel and spent long hours cruising from Santarem to Vila Franca, the village across the Tapajos (nobody there knew anything about the dead fishermen), then from there through one of the smaller rivers connecting the Tapajos to the Amazon river itself and then going farther up the Amazon.

Again we stopped and talked to anyone who might know something. But we were never able to confirm anything about the dead men or horses. Many people said they had heard of one incident or the other, but no one could tell us anything for certain.

Tangled Up in Nets

Nearly everywhere we went, however, we found people who'd had UFO encounters. Some of the more interesting

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reports came in the village of Guajara. We reached it about eight at night, after the sun had set, and we were immediately attacked by clouds of mosquitoes that tormented us until we left two hours later, and the river breeze blew them away.

On the porch of a large building at Guajara, that we thought was a warehouse but turned out to be a private home, were about twenty men whiling away the evening by listening to loud music on a radio. That seemed to be the major source of entertainment, until we arrived anyway, and then we became the center of attention.

With me, in addition to Hollanda, were Charles Tucker, a fellow investigator from Indiana, and Carlos Montenegro, our Cessna pilot. Hollanda at that time was a major in the Brazilian air force and was seriously interested in UFOs. He speaks English and French fluently and interpreted for us during the entire Amazon trip.

In the small crowd at Guajara was David Da Sousa, a young economist from Belem who was in charge of rebuilding a plantation in the area. He said that until about four months earlier the people had seen UFOs at least once a week for nearly two years.

"The fishermen would see a big light like a fire that chased them when they ran," he said as all the men crowded around. "In one instance, when the fishermen lit a fire on the beach to cook fish, a UFO came within three or four meters of them and shined a light down on the fire. The men were afraid they'd be taken away and ran up a hill. The UFO followed them and shined a light on them all the way, and then it disappeared. They were very afraid. They call the UFOs 'chupa-chupa.' They believe the UFOs can take your blood."

One man in the crowded room, Manoel Da Morta, said he was fishing with his son one night when a UFO "came

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down close to us and turned different colors, green, yellow, orange, red and white. We were afraid we were going to die, and we ran. We got tangled up in the nets and ran all the way home with the nets wrapped around us."

Another man, Manoel Dos Santos, was fishing with his brother on a lake when a big light appeared. "It was very bright white and turned light blue, lighting up everything for four hundred meters around. It made our skin look blue. The light was moving around like it was searching for somebody. We don't fish at night anymore. We're too afraid."

These fishermen had more to fear than just UFOs, Da Sousa said, explaining: "Everybody runs into the jungle to hide, and they're afraid that in the dark they'll step on poisonous snakes and be bitten."

UFOs or deadly snakes that you can't see in the dark? What a choice.

A 'Big Light'

We didn't have to make that decision. We slapped mosquitoes away, said goodbye and started chugging back down river toward Santarem. Earlier I was concerned about how we would find our way back in the darkness, and Hollanda said: "Oh, the pilot has a big flashlight."

I assumed his vocabulary was lacking and that he meant a spotlight on the boat some place. But I was wrong. The pilot did have a big flashlight, which he would turn on every few minutes. There were two reasons for this. One was to spot the right bank and see how far from it we were while at the same time dodging any floating debris in front of us. The other purpose was to warn oncoming passenger boats that we were out there on the river, too. That can be scary, because those boats are enormous monsters at least three decks high and seem to move as fast as speeding locomotives. They could have crunched over us and never felt a thing.

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We made it back to Santarem without mishap about midnight. The next day we flew to another village between Santarem and Obidos, where people had to shoo horses and goats away from the airstrip before we could land. There we had more interviews and heard more UFO stories.

A day later, we abandoned our pilot, Carlos, and the Cessna in the town of Monte Alegre northeast of Santarem because the engine self-destructed after we made some repairs. Eventually we reached Belem and went our separate ways, Hollanda back to work, Tucker returning to Indiana and me flying on to Fortaleza.

Perhaps someday we will find out where and how the fishermen and horses died, if they did. Many stories like these come to the attention of investigators, and a lot of time is spent trying to find out if they're true. It is simply part of the job, although no one's forcing us to do it. Sometimes we discover they're not true, but more often there's simply no way to find out.

Many reports are vague, and nobody's sure where they come from. The story about the dead men, though, seemed authentic. The information came in a letter that a riverboat captain wrote to the commanding officer of the air base in Belem. The commandant in turn told Major Hollanda, who had once led a lengthy official investigation into numerous UFO sightings near Belem, and Hollanda had mentioned the report to me. It wasn't until July 1981 that Hollanda and I were able to get together to try to find out whether the story was true.

Our trip was not a failure. No trip ever is, because we always come across unexpected information. On this trip we had some good interviews and adventures and discovered anew what we'd known all along - that UFOs do strange and sometimes terrible things in Brazil.

1. Mon-WELL GHEE-YAIR-may.

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2. Con-say-SOW (as in OW!). It means conception.
3. OB-ee-duce.
4. Oo-ee-RAHN-gee Oh-LAHN-duh. More about him later.

Chapter Ten

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE

Encounters can be so frightening that some people risk their lives to get away. Jose Pereira Da Souza is a prime example. He could easily have gotten killed as he fled from a UFO chasing him.

Jose is a farmer who lives in Puxinana, Paraiba, the state adjoining Rio Grande do Norte on the south.[1] His brush with death remains so vivid in his memory that, when we met him in September 1991 he recalled the exact date and time, even though it occurred twenty years earlier.

"This happened on March 22, 1971, at eleven-fifty P.M.," Jose, forty-four, said. He had just finished working at his future father-in-law's farinha house, where manioc roots are soaked, mashed, roasted and turned into flour. "I was coming home and stopped to relieve myself. When I looked up, I saw a ball of light. I began running, and it chased me."

He didn't try to hide. He ran more than four hundred yards to his home -- at least one hundred of them across a high dam. Even in daylight just walking across the dam can be scary. The top is less than ten feet wide and has a railing only on the water side. The other side has just a sheer drop of fifty-five feet to big boulders at the bottom. A misstep could be fatal.

With a dozen other investigators, most of them members of a UFO group from the nearby state capital of Campina Grande, I had to cross the dam twice, once to reach

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Jose's house and again to return to our cars. Even in the daylight it was unnerving. Jose ran across it as fast as he could in the dark, when a stumble could have sent him plunging to his death. He was well aware of the danger but was more frightened by the thing at his heels.

"When I got to the dam, the object came very close to me," Jose said. "It was about ten meters in diameter and had blue, pink and red colors on it. The light was about as bright as a fifteen-watt bulb and was giving out smoke or vapor. It came down very low over the water. I thought they were trying to catch me. I was really afraid."

He reached the far end of the dam without tripping and raced the last hundred yards to his house, screaming for his mother to open the door. As he dashed inside, he saw the UFO going away in the west.

His mother had poor eyesight and didn't see it. When he told her what happened, she dismissed his story, saying: "You just saw a ghost. Men who walk around at night always meet up with ghosts."

Could be. But it wasn't a ghost to Jose. He called it a spaceship. Initially, he'd seen what he thought was a big head with red eyes in the bushes, but quickly realized it was a ball of light as it rose up off the ground. That's when he fled.

Some Kind of Experiment?

Why are people like Jose put at risk in the first place? It's almost certain the UFO aliens could have captured him if they had wanted to. Who knows what they're thinking? We might just as well try to figure out what's going on in the mind of an ant or a microbe.

Perhaps he was part of some experiment the UFO crew was conducting:

There's a two-legged animal relieving itself in the

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bushes. What will it do when we turn the lights on? Ah, it's running. Right across the top of the big wall with water on one side and a long drop on the other. Let's follow and see if it reaches the end without going off either side. Yes, it does. Interesting. They all seem to run. Let's go find another one.

And they do find plenty of them, even when the people are going somewhere in the dark without a light of any kind that would attract attention. These UFO aliens see in the darkness, either with their own vision or a night-sighting device, and have been able to do so for at least the fifty years or so that we know UFOs have been around. How this can be done is no mystery because today's modern armies now have such tools and use them effectively to destroy enemy targets.

Why the UFOs pick out a particular person is another question. Most of the people who've had a "Sudden Daylight" experience, where everything lights up as bright as day, have been farmers or fishermen. And most of them have been left unharmed. Badly frightened perhaps, but nothing happens to them. It's as if the UFOs are making sure people are aware that they're still around.

Many of these people simply see a bright light and nothing else. But sometimes an object or a part of one is seen. Joao Gomes Da Costa saw something sticking out beyond the light the night he was riding a burro in the mountains near the small town of Lajes Pintadas in Rio Grande do Norte.

"It lit up everything for about sixty meters around me, and I felt a cold wind at the same time. It was like air conditioning. I could see an antenna on top of it, like a television antenna."

Joao was very frightened but didn't try to run, and the burro paid no attention to the light.[2] After about a minute,

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the light disappeared and Joao hurried home as fast as the burro could take him.

An appendage like a TV antenna doesn't make sense on something that's supposedly so high-tech that it's beyond our comprehension. Until World War II most military aircraft had radio antennas, but when the jet age brought faster and faster planes, developers put them inside the aircraft. One possible conclusion is that Joao either misinterpreted what he saw or the "antenna" was part of some masquerade for his benefit.

Where Did It Go?

Two other people we talked to in September 1992 had similar experiences but saw no details on the objects and weren't hurt in any way.

One was a twenty-year-old man who was walking in the countryside at night with his parents and six younger brothers and sisters. They were going to visit some relatives on another farm. As they were passing a reservoir, they heard a humming noise rapidly getting louder, and it seemed to be coming toward them. Suddenly everything lit up for a thousand feet around.

Everyone was frightened. The younger children began crying, and the mother was sure the world was coming to an end as she gathered them around her. But the light and humming noise quickly passed overhead, and suddenly the light just blinked out. The noise stopped at the same time. They didn't see or hear anything more.

Initially, this incident meant nothing to me other than yet another light lighting up and scaring some people. But while shaving one morning six months later, I realized it was much, much more than that.

The sound getting louder and louder meant to the family that something was coming toward them in the dark.

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And something was. It came flying through the air and when it got very close, it suddenly lit up everything around them, passed over them and then just as suddenly ceased to exist. If the sound stops in any of man's magnificent flying machines, the machine usually goes crashing to earth. But not this UFO.

Where did it go? Did it simply turn "invisible" and sit there in the sky watching the frightened family and then decide to leave them alone? Did it slip into a parallel universe, and for that reason could no longer be heard or seen? If it did move into another universe, why? To go back home? Were the crew members bored with these earthlings? Could they have somehow spotted some other unsuspecting victims in a neighboring universe who were more interesting? These are questions that will be answered one day by our scientists, many of whom believe parallel universes may exist.

The other case involved a young man who was helping an uncle and four or five other men tend a sick cow one evening when a brief blast of light lit up the sky. The uncle and the others, bending over the cow, saw only the flash, but the nephew was standing up and had seen a small light moving toward them in the sky. It suddenly flared into a brilliant light, quickly diminished into a small light again and then turned and shot straight up into the sky until it disappeared.

This is what I call the "Instant Star" facet of the phenomenon, in which a UFO shoots so far out into the atmosphere that it is lost among the stars. Usually this takes mere seconds, far faster than any manmade rocket. I've heard such reports from a number of people, including American military personnel.

To recap, Joao saw an antenna and felt a cold wind. The young man and his family heard a humming noise that shut off when the light did. The nephew saw the UFO coming,
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give off a blinding flash of light and then vanish among the stars. Joao's encounter was in 1981, the other two in 1991. It seems obvious that we're dealing with nuts- and-bolts craft that have been around a long time and are still here.

Pre-Dawn Attack

Most of these incidents seem to take place early in the evening, perhaps because more people are out and about at that time of night. One man and his son, however, had the scare of their lives just before dawn one day. They are Antonio Comes Da Silva, fifty, and Justino, fifteen. They live in the city of Sao Goncalo do Amarante, west of Fortaleza in Ceara.

"In June 1989 we were going to a farm on our bicycles to get milk," the father said as Jean Alencar interpreted. "It was about five A.M. and still dark. We were near a lagoon and we saw a big light over the lagoon. It came toward us, about fifty meters high. The light was so bright we couldn't see the object.

"There were many colors flashing on and off, beams of light, blue, green, yellow, red, strange colors. Some were like the sun. I've never seen such colors before. It was moving slowly, and the lights spread out in all directions, lighting up the lagoon. It never made a sound.

"Both of us got scared, and we ran and hid in a house near the road. We had to wake the family up to let us in. The object passed over the house and went away."

A week later, Antonio was going to the farm by himself, again on his bicycle, this time between four-thirty and five in the morning.

"I was going around a curve, and I heard what I thought was a tractor ahead of me. I thought it was the farmer coming to meet me. But when it got close to me, I realized it wasn't a tractor. It had a small red light, and

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suddenly the noise stopped. When it was about one hundred meters from me, the red light started going up into the air. I got so scared I threw my bicycle down and ran into the bushes.

"The object rose straight up and went off at an angle to the north. Then it came down again and shined a light toward me. It was looking for me, and I kept dodging the light. By now it was very bright and lighting up everything like daylight. There were many colored lights coming out of it, but there was one big one searching for me. I was fascinated by the different colors, but it was hard to look at them because of the big bright light. Then it just suddenly took off at an angle and disappeared.

"After that I never went out on the road before dawn again. I had been going to the farm with thirty-liter cans to get milk for twelve years, something I have to do every day. But I don't do that in the dark anymore."

Was it a coincidence or did the UFO try to pass itself off as a tractor? Antonio had come this way every day before dawn, and it's possible the UFO was waiting for him. The same UFO or another one had chased him and his son on this road a week before. But if the UFO beings were waiting, they didn't seem to make a serious effort to catch him. Either they were bumblers or they simply meant to scare him.

Women Have to Hide

Everyone I've talked to who's had such an encounter was scared badly because, to them, the UFOs were a genuine threat to their safety and perhaps their lives. Ten days after talking with Antonio and his son in September 1991, Cynthia Luce and I interviewed Josefa Da Costa, thirty-eight, a housewife and mother of five children in Apodi, Rio Grande do Norte.

On July 20, 1990, Josefa had gone to Soledade, eight miles northwest of Apodi, to be with her family because a

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relative had died. About eleven that night, she and a sister-in-law, Evanilda Da Costa, also thirty-eight, went for a walk behind the house.

"We were talking, and a big ball of light came and lit up everything," Josefa said. "It was very bright. It came toward us and got smaller and then diminished and then got big again. We were afraid because it circled around as if it was looking for us.

"We were in the back garden with bushes around and we hid under a shelter. The light was about half a meter in size and only about four and a half meters above the ground. It didn't make any sound. It went around the garden, and once we were caught in the reflection of the light, Evanilda more than me. It was hot. I was so afraid I was trembling. After about twenty minutes, it went away. It went off into the distance, seemed to get smaller and then just flickered out."

Sometimes a UFO inflicts damage by just hovering over a person. That happened to Manoel Oliveira, thirty- five, a farm hand. He was walking across a field near Lajes in Rio Grande do Norte one evening in May 1991 when a light flashed on above him. He ran under the nearest tree, and the light followed him.

"The object was oval shaped and about five meters above me," Manoel said. "It had all different colored lights blinking on it. Almost immediately I got a terrible headache. The light would go out and come on again. I felt a prickly heat but I was also cold at the same time. This happened four or five times before it went away a half hour later. I was very thirsty but the worst thing was the headache. Since then I haven't gone outside at night anymore. I'm afraid it will happen again."

Manoel's headache might have been caused by acute anxiety brought on by fear, but it's also possible the UFO was giving off radiation of some kind that triggered the headache.

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Headaches are common in encounters, as are eye strain, nausea, diarrhea and a number of other complaints. Several of these physical effects showed up in an unusual trio of events that took place in the same area over four nights. So many incidents in one place and in such a short time span are unusual.

We start with the third and least eventful one. The story came from Francisco Da Silva, thirty-three, who was hunting doves with three other men in the mountains west of Campo Redondo in Rio Grande do Norte on the night of August 6, 1992. This was less than a month before we talked to him. The men had shot a bird and were picking it up when a light appeared in the sky near them.

"It was like a yellowish ball of fire, one and a half to two meters in diameter," Francisco said. "It was eight or nine meters away from us, and it scared us because the same thing had just happened to two other men. We stayed under the tree for half an hour before the object went away. Then we ran like hell to get home."

Barbed Wire Hazard

The other two incidents involved men named Balinga and Borrinho, who ran afoul of UFOs in the same hills several nights earlier.[3]

Borrinho is the nickname of Antonio Moreira Da Silva, thirty-eight, also of Campo Redondo. On August 3, three nights before Francisco and his companions had their run-in with a UFO, Borrinho and a friend named Eranovo were hunting birds when a wind blew out their oil lamp.

"Then we saw a big light just above the bushes," Borrinho said. "It was about fifty meters away from us, rocking back and forth, and we could feel heat from it. Then it started coming toward us, and I started running away from it."

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Unfortunately, he couldn't see where he was going and ran into a barbed wire fence, getting badly cut on both legs. Before he could break his momentum, he fell over the fence into an ant hill and was also bitten by ants.

His companion, Eranovo, chose not to run from the UFO, and he came walking up in time to help Borrinho get out of the ant hill. By then the UFO had disappeared. Eranovo is one of the few people I've heard of who didn't run from a UFO, and nothing happened to him. We weren't able to talk to him to find out why he didn't run.

Besides the numerous ant bites and cuts, which required a tetanus shot, Borrinho had a bad headache and for two days had trouble seeing because the light from the UFO had hurt his eyes. It took fifteen days for his eyes to clear up. He still had scars and scabs all over his legs when Cynthia Luce and I interviewed him.

One other interesting element in Borrinho's case is that the UFO was rocking back and forth like a pendulum, which is what happened after Moises and Francisca had their encounters on Sitio Timbauba, only about six miles to the northeast.

Balinga Gets Slimed

The third case, Balinga's encounter, is one of the strangest I've ever heard of. It occurred the night after Borrinho's. Balinga is the nickname of Antonio Lourenco Da Silva, thirty-five, a farmer who lives with his wife and children on the southwestern edge of Campo Redondo.[4]

He actually had two bad UFO experiences. The first occurred late one night in 1991. He was carrying a bundle of grass to feed some animals in a field behind his house when a bright light suddenly came on above him and made a buzzing sound. The UFO came down close and shined a beam of light on him as he ran, and then it went away. He had a fever for several days.

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He wasn't as fortunate the next time. On the night of August 4, 1992, just thirty days before we talked to him, he and his brother, Joao, eighteen, were crossing a farm northwest of Campo Redondo.

"We were bringing a donkey home and were hurrying, trying to get home before it got too dark because we didn't have a light with us. It was about six-thirty and we were hitting the donkey, trying to get her to run. Suddenly a big light like a car headlight turned on above us. It was just like daytime it was so bright. It was making a noise, like 'Ping! Ping! Ping!'

"There was no place to go. I told Joao to get under the donkey quick, and I bent over and pushed him down. As I did I felt a lot of heat on my back. It was quite hot, and the left side of my back got numb. And then I got under her myself.

"Joao was hanging onto her back legs and I wrapped my arms around her front legs. I felt sort of strange and a little lightheaded from the heat. I reached back, touched my left shoulder and felt something oily."

They stayed under the animal for three or four minutes, scared to death, and then the light turned off and the object vanished. The donkey was unperturbed throughout, content to stand still. As soon as the brothers realized the UFO was gone, they got the donkey moving at last, and they ran all the way home, more than three miles.

"My shirt felt odd, and I took it off when I got in the house," Balinga said. "The back of it was covered with something very thick, oily and yellowish, like grease. It had a disagreeable odor to it."

The substance stood out on the black cotton fabric, but neither he nor his wife, Noemia, had any idea what it was. She washed the shirt. She told us the greasy matter left a scum on the water, which she tossed out when she had finished. When the shirt dried, there was no stain or odor to

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indicate what the gunk might have been.

Some people, on first hearing this story, believe the donkey urinated on Balinga. But he was holding her front legs and none of the substance got on Joao, who was under her plumbing parts. Furthermore, these people have been around farm animals all their lives and are quite familiar with the feel, smell and consistency of animal urine, and it isn’t thick, oily or greasy. In addition, urine wouldn't have made Balinga's back numb. Besides, who's going to admit they let a donkey pee on them?

The numbness in Balinga's back gave way to soreness which lasted for a month. He also had a fever for a few days and suffered from headaches.

The second incident gave Balinga new respect for UFOs. "When it gets to be five o'clock now, I want to be home inside," he said.

Not Unique?

Being slimed by a UFO definitely is unique. None of the approximately seventeen hundred people I've talked to who've had UFO experiences has ever been, well, dumped on the way he was. But the odds are that somewhere someone else has had a similar experience, and I may run into him or her on the next field trip.

Both Januncio and his son, Beato, had something like hot oil dropped on them, but the liquid quickly evaporated and left no stains, only burns that quickly healed. Balinga was not burned by the oily substance, which stayed on his shirt until it was washed out, but his shoulder was numb for a while and sore for about a month.

The "ping-ing" sound he heard is a little different from the humming or buzzing that others have reported. What that means is anybody's guess. Most of the time the UFOs are silent.

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The thing that ties all these cases together is that the UFOs suddenly appear overhead in a blaze of light without warning, nearly always find their victims in the dark, and then chase them. Whether the UFOs actually intend to catch them is questionable, given their ability to snatch people at will, but the victims feel certain they're being chased. In none of these cases did anyone feel as if he were being pulled upward toward the UFO.

Several witnesses also felt coldness or a cold wind. In a few cases the witnesses felt heat from the light, and sometimes that light caused such physical effects as headaches, dizziness and numbness.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect, though, is that the witnesses were able to take refuge under a tree or bush or in a house or under a donkey and avoid capture, if that is what the aliens' intention was.

However, hiding under a tree can be almost as dangerous as standing under one in an electrical storm -- as the next chapter reveals.

1. Poo-she-NAH-nah, Par-rah-EE-bah.
2. Zhuh-WOW. In English, he'd be called John.
3. Bah-LEEN-gah and Bo-HEEN-yo. In Brazilian Portuguese, a double R is pronounced as an H is in English, while an H following an N or an L is like Y, as in canyon.
4. Da Silva is one of a number of names that are common in Brazil. Being named Antonio Da Silva is like being named Tom Smith in the United States.

Chapter Eleven

THE BURNING TREE

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A tree isn't always a safe place to hide from a UFO nor can you always count on a neighbor to help when things get desperate. For some people, a TV soap opera may be more important than a UFO lurking outside the house.

A fascinating encounter that illustrates these two points involved Jerinaldo Dantes, a mild-mannered young man who loves pop music, and Sebastiani Sales, a middle- aged neighbor who loves soap operas.

A UFO took an unhealthy interest in Jerinaldo as he was riding his bicycle home about six one September afternoon in 1991. He was eighteen at the time and lived with his parents, two brothers and a sister at Sitio Inga, a farm four miles southeast of Acari in Rio Grande do Norte.

He had worked all day on an uncle's farm and was listening to the latest hits on his Walkman as he pedaled along a dirt road that passes through a larger farm, Fazenda Inga. The setting sun was at his back, and he was about two hundred yards from the fazenda's main house and barns.

"It was just getting dark when I saw a big ball of light coming toward me from the direction of the mountains," Jerinaldo told us a year later. "It was all colors, blue, red, green. It came down toward me, and suddenly my Walkman was filled with static. I was so frightened that I threw my bicycle down and ran under a tree, squatted down and wrapped my arms around the trunk.

"The light came down and stopped right over the tree. It was sitting just above the tree, and I was under there for a long time. I tried to look up at it sometimes but I was terribly scared. I felt very cold, but I also felt a lot of heat coming from above. It was so hot, I was afraid it was going to burn up the tree."

Tree Smashes Down

Jerinaldo hugged the trunk for about twenty minutes, but

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the heat had become so intense that he realized it was too dangerous to stay any longer. Just two or three feet to his left was a barbed wire fence, and he lunged under the bottom strand of wire, then scrambled furiously about twenty feet out into a corral -- and not a second too soon.

"Just as I went under the fence, I heard a loud CRACK!" Jerinaldo said. "I got a little farther away and heard a second CRACK! Then I saw the tree fall over on the fence, smashing it down."

Jerinaldo was hunched down on the ground, terrified of what might happen next. The top of the tree had broken off and fallen and crushed the section of fence that he'd just scooted under. The menacing bluish ball of light still hovered above the scorched, smoldering stump, still lighting everything around.

"I sat there really scared and trembling," Jerinaldo said. "I was still in the light, and I thought the thing was coming after me. But the light just turned off and a moment later came on again, way off in the west. When the light went out, the coldness that I was feeling went too."

His story could be dismissed as just a teenager's active imagination, but there was an independent witness, something unusual in such encounters. In the big farmhouse two hundred yards away was Sebastiani Sales, fifty-six, whose family owns the farm. She had seen much of what had happened to Jerinaldo.

We tracked her down at a neighbor's house the morning after we talked to Jerinaldo. Sebastiani said that when the UFO incident began, she had been watching a *novela*, or TV soap opera.

"I heard the dog barking really loud as I was watching the *novela*," she said. "I lost my patience with the dog and went to the window to see what he was barking at. I opened the shutters and saw a 'fire' above the tree. It was a bluish

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ball of light sixty to seventy centimeters in diameter and was giving off strong blue sparks of electricity or whatever it was. It was lighting up the whole area.

"So then I went to the door and watched. The light was very low, touching the tree. And there was this fellow squatting under the tree. At first I didn't realize he was underneath the tree because the light made it hard to see."

To understand what happened next, an explanation is necessary. In Brazil, TV soap operas are broadcast early in the evening and about forty million people watch every night, a fourth of the country's population. *Novelas* are so popular that when a soap opera star was murdered in 1992 and her co-star was arrested, the news nearly overshadowed the resignation of the country's president in a corruption scandal.

Back to the Soap Opera

One of those forty million faithful viewers is Sebastiani — and as strange as the blue ball of fire was out there on top of that tree with the terrified young man under it, she wasn't going to let it keep her from her program any longer.

"I realized I was going to miss my *novela*, so I shut the door and the window and went back inside to watch it," she said, laughing and embarrassed to admit that she'd left Jerinaldo to his fate.

"Shortly after that he came to the door and started banging on it. He was very upset, and he said, 'Look at what happened! There was a flying saucer above the tree!' He also told me that when it got close to him, he started feeling a terrible coldness. He'd lost his hat and thrown his bicycle down in the middle of the road, and he wanted me to go get his bicycle. But I said I wasn't going to go get it because the light was still out there."

By that she meant the UFO could still be seen in the sky far off in the distance. "We were both afraid," she

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continued. "I said to him, 'Let's call the farm manager and ask him because I'm not going to go get it.' I phoned the manager and he got the bicycle."

She didn't see the tree fall but she knew it had.

"I heard it cracking and breaking," Sebastiani said. "This tree was very, very green, and early the next morning, I went out to look at it. It was very strange because it sort of had burned fibers or elements around the tree, the leaves were all burned, and it looked as if the tree had been scratched by big nails."

Jerinaldo finally reached his own home, less than a mile away, about two hours after the incident began. "He was absolutely hysterical," his mother Marta told us. "He couldn't even talk."

This case was first investigated by Sales Pagannini, at that time a high school student who headed a UFO group in Acari, and it was he who took Cynthia Luce and me to the farm. Also helping us were Ronaldo Farias, one of the dozen Campina Grande investigators who had generously shared some of their cases with us in Paraiba the year before, and his wife Jacqueline, a native of Acari.

Jerinaldo didn't have any headaches, nausea or other effects following the incident, but his mother Marta believes it left him with some psychological problems. "He was sort of absent-minded for a while, and he seems more timid now," she said.

Jerinaldo went to work again the morning after the encounter, listening to his Walkman as usual, which was running perfectly again. That's when he first saw the burned tree in daylight.

We also got a good look at the tree ourselves. The charred and twisted pieces from the top half that broke off were still lying on the ground near the trunk, where they had been dragged off the smashed fence. Two of the bigger limbs

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on the ground had wide cracks running down the sides, split open perhaps as the sap inside boiled under the intense heat from the UFO. The scorched part of the trunk that was left standing had begun to sprout new growth and looked like it would grow into a whole tree again some day.

No Storm or Power Lines

The night this happened to Jerinaldo, the sky was completely clear. There weren't any clouds, which would rule out lightning. Nor are there any electricity lines near the tree, ruling out any electrical causes, such as wires touching and burning or a transformer exploding, causing the tree to burn.

Burned trees and other vegetation are not rare in UFO encounters but don't happen too often. When the old rancher, Januncio, was clinging to a palm tree, the heat from the UFO above him was so hot that he was afraid it was going to kill him. Januncio estimated the incident lasted less than two minutes and believed he would have died if it had lasted any longer because it was so hot.

This must be how Jerinaldo felt when the heat became unbearable. The tree broke off only three to four feet above the ground, and the section of trunk left standing was charred all the way to the ground. This is the part that he had been clinging to, and it's very likely he would have been burned if he had stayed.

As for the coldness that he felt while being subjected to the growing heat, shock could explain it. But the moment the UFO left, the coldness went away also, and shock doesn't end that quickly.

The UFO must have been emitting electromagnetic radiation of some kind, in the beginning anyway, because it caused Jerinaldo's Walkman to broadcast nothing but static.

Why didn't the object finish the job if it were going after Jerinaldo? It zeroed in on him as he was riding his bicycle

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and then stayed above the tree all the time he hid under it. The UFO aliens had to know he was there, and they poured the heat on until it became intolerable and Jerinaldo had to get away from it.

Yet, as he huddled in fear in the corral only twenty feet away, still highly visible, the UFO made no effort to go after him. Instead, it turned off the light, disappeared and re-appeared a mile or two to the west. Whoever these aliens are, they acted like lethal bullies and as such may have wanted to show Jerinaldo how mean and powerful they were. If so, he was convinced.

As frightened as he was, he wasn't afraid to go out with friends again the next night and every night after that. "Nothing keeps me home at night," he said laughing.

Almost anyone else who'd had such a terrifying experience would stay inside at night for awhile to make sure it didn't happen again. They'd be happy never to see another UFO.

There are exceptions to almost everything, though, and I met one man who was hurt so bad by a UFO that he thought he was going to die -- but he wants it to happen again. In the next chapter we see why.

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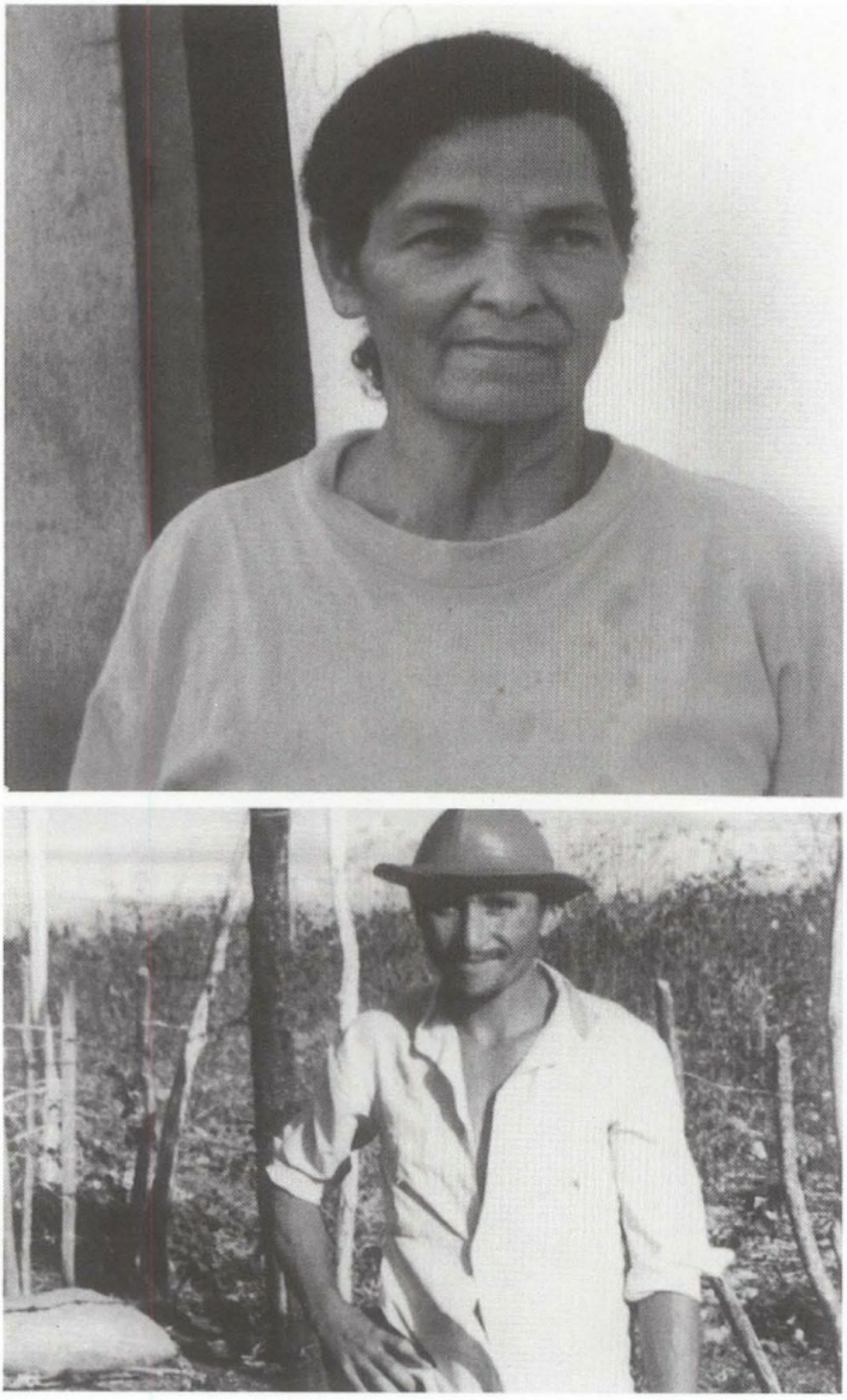

Top: Maria Dos Dores Lopes
Bottom: "Balinga" (Antonio Lourenco Da Silva)

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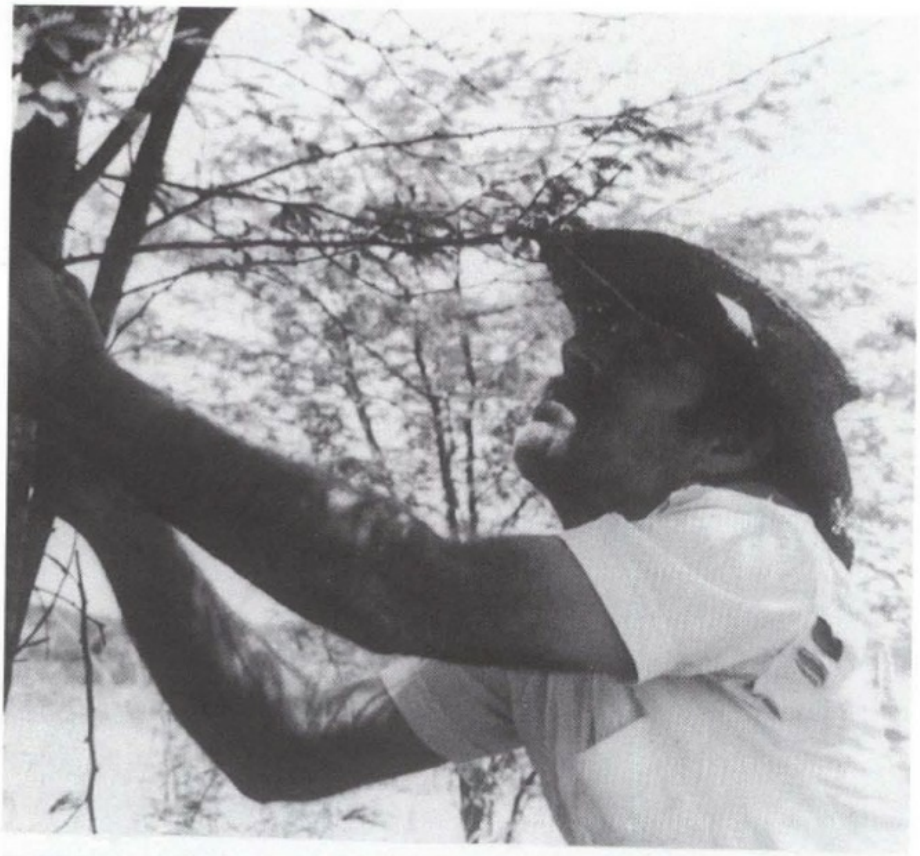

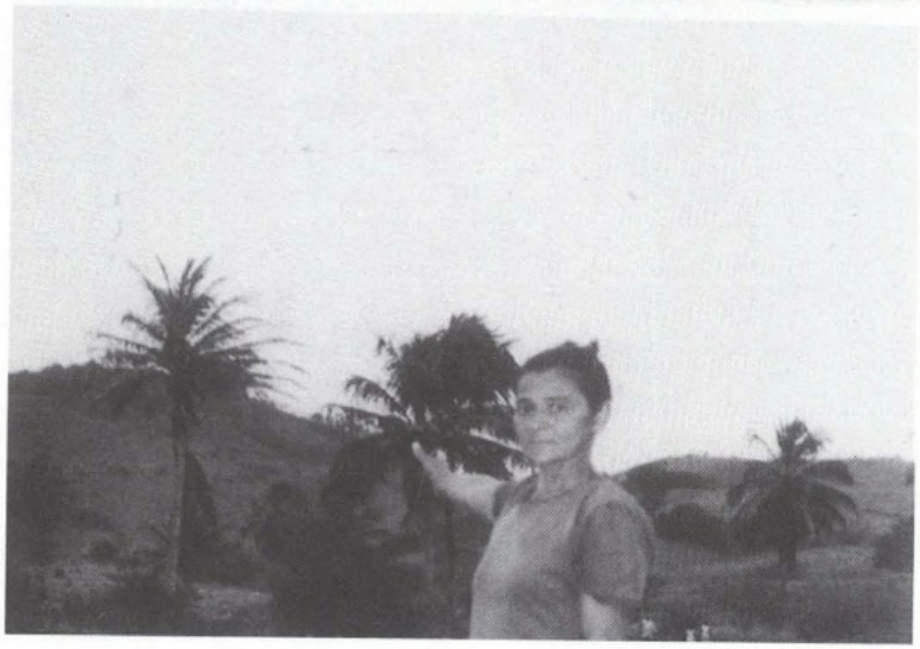

Top: "Beato" (Benedito Henrique De Souza).
Bottom: Francisca Bispo De Assis who was lifted by a light.

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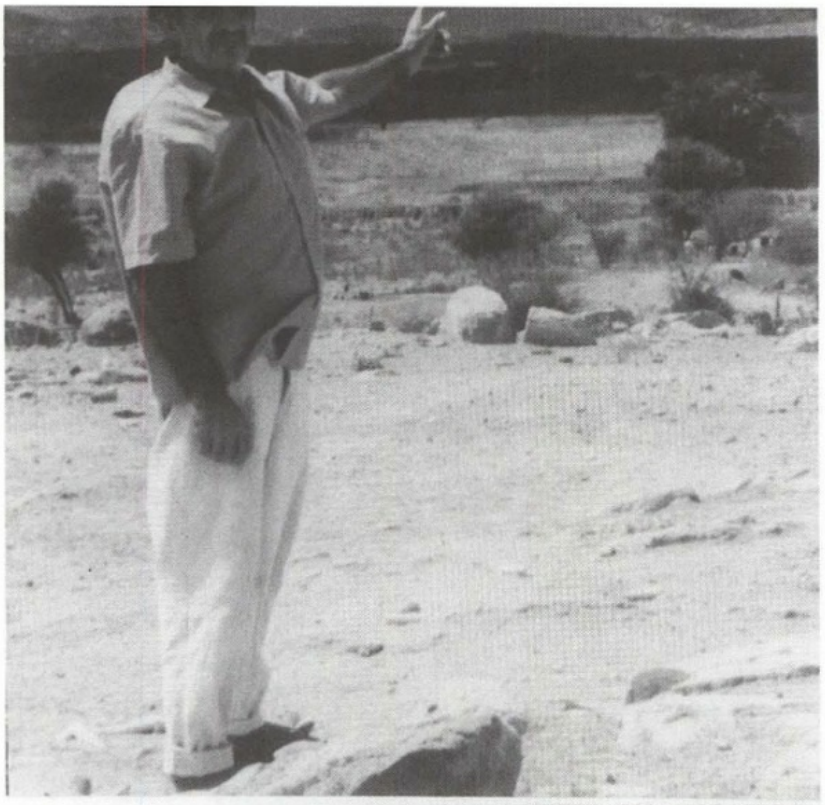

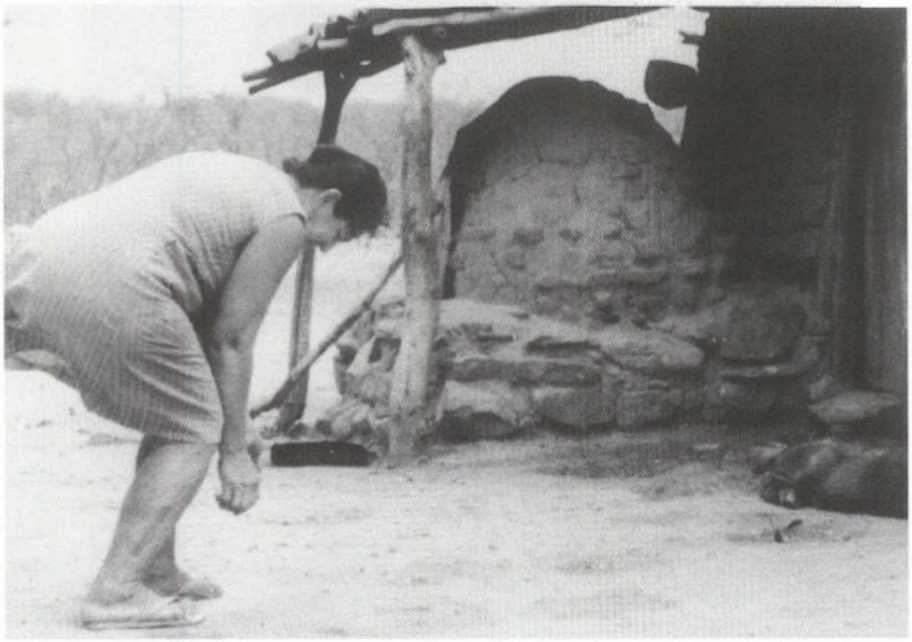

Top: Francisco Marciano De Abreu points in the direction of bright light that sickened him.
Bottom: Maria Natividade Cavalcante shows how she crouched as UFO hovered over her.

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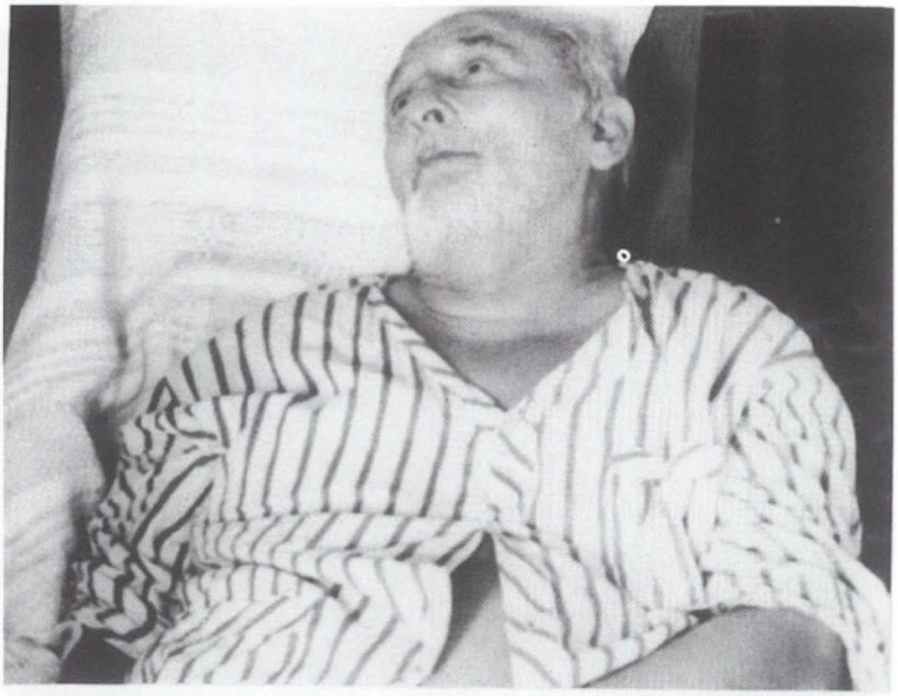

Top: Luis Fernandes Barroso remained in a vegetative state seventeen years after UFO attack.
Bottom: Author with Maria Souza, Firmino's wife.

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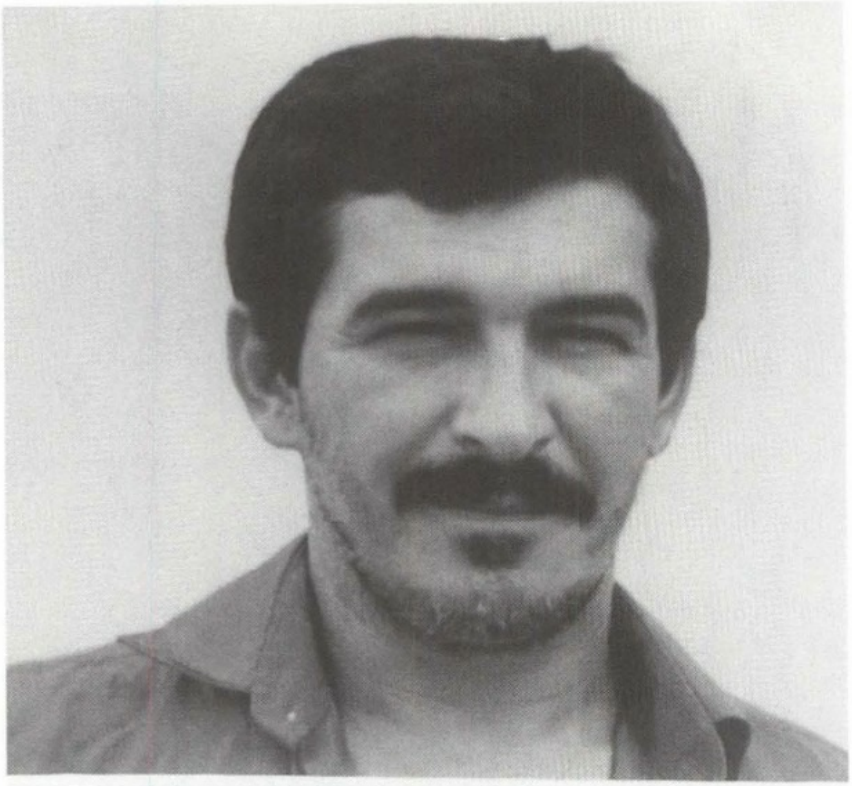

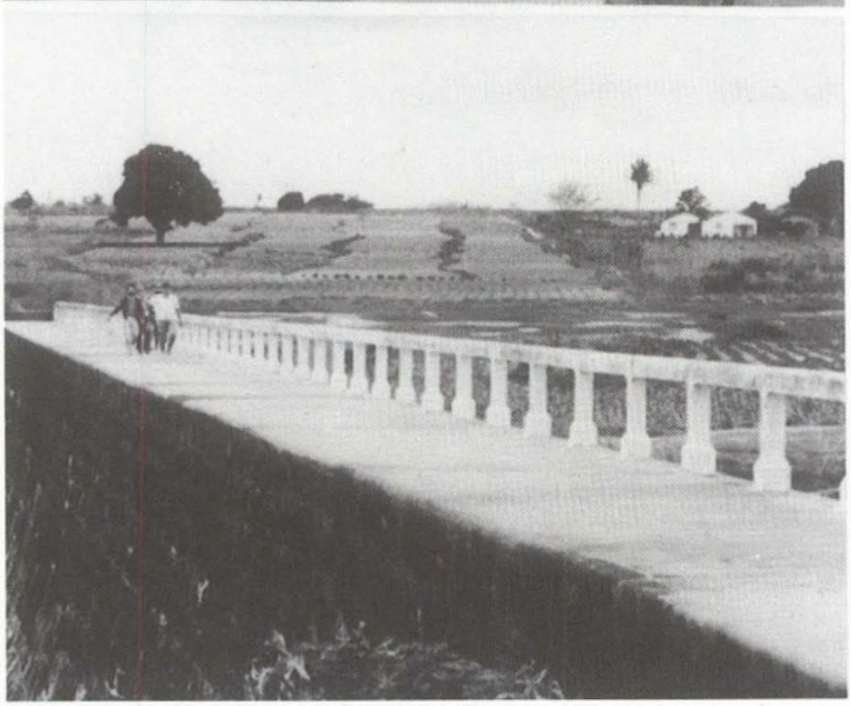

Top: "Bebeto" (Jose Garinberto Dantes) has seen many strange lights in the sky since 1990.
Bottom: Dam in Puxivana, Paraiba, that Jose Pereira Da Souza crossed fleeing UFO.

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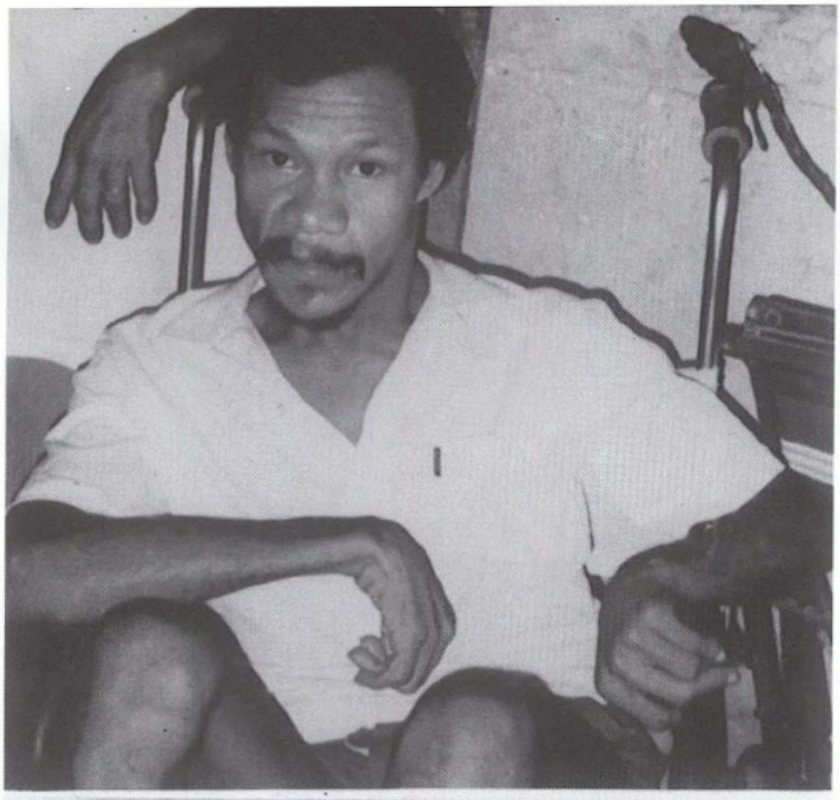

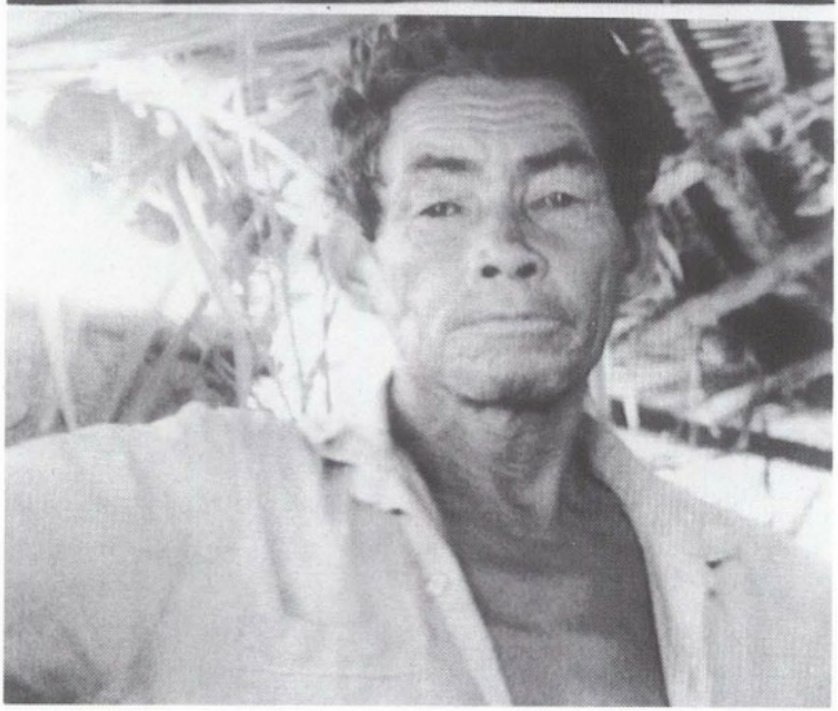

Top: Jose Vonilson Dos Santos has been confined to wheelchair since 1979 UFO attack.
Bottom: "Chico Gama" (Francisco Da Conceicao hid from beam of red light for three hours while fishing.

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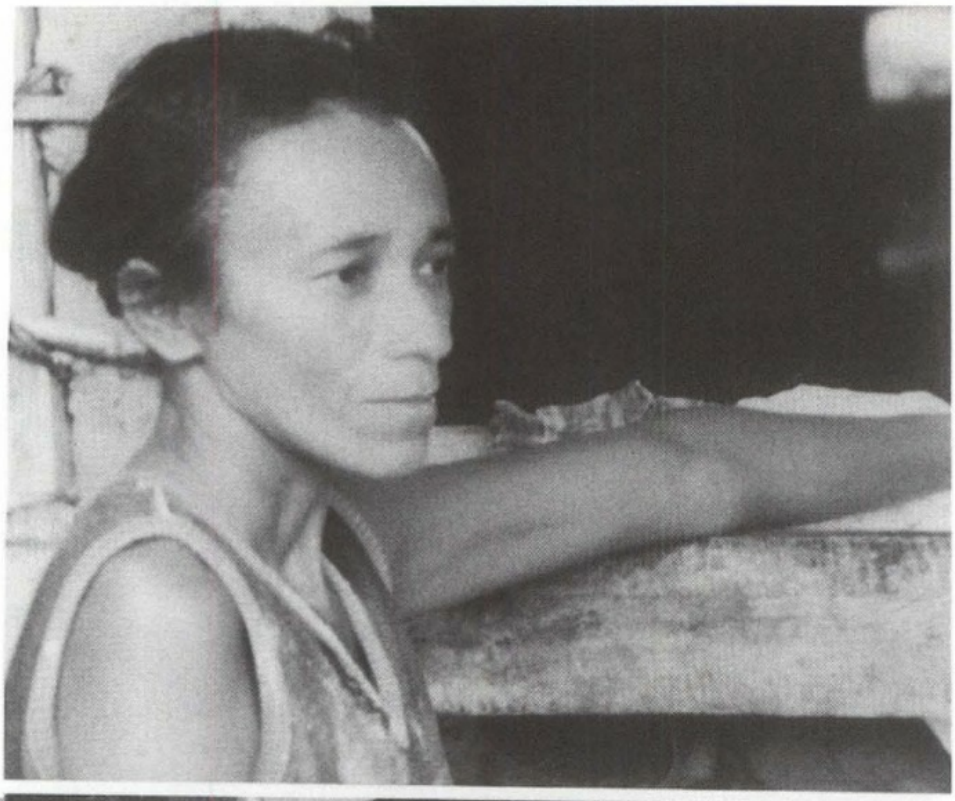

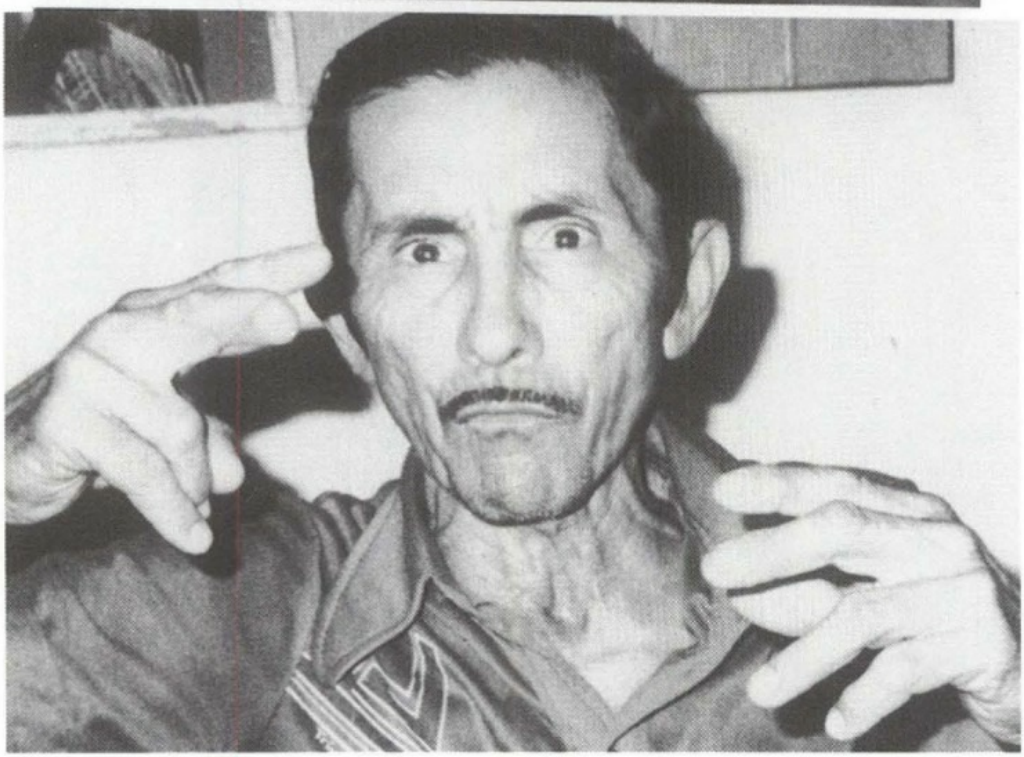

Top: Claudiomira Rodrigues who was burned by a UFO ray in 1978.
Bottom: Benedito Bogea describes his abduction.

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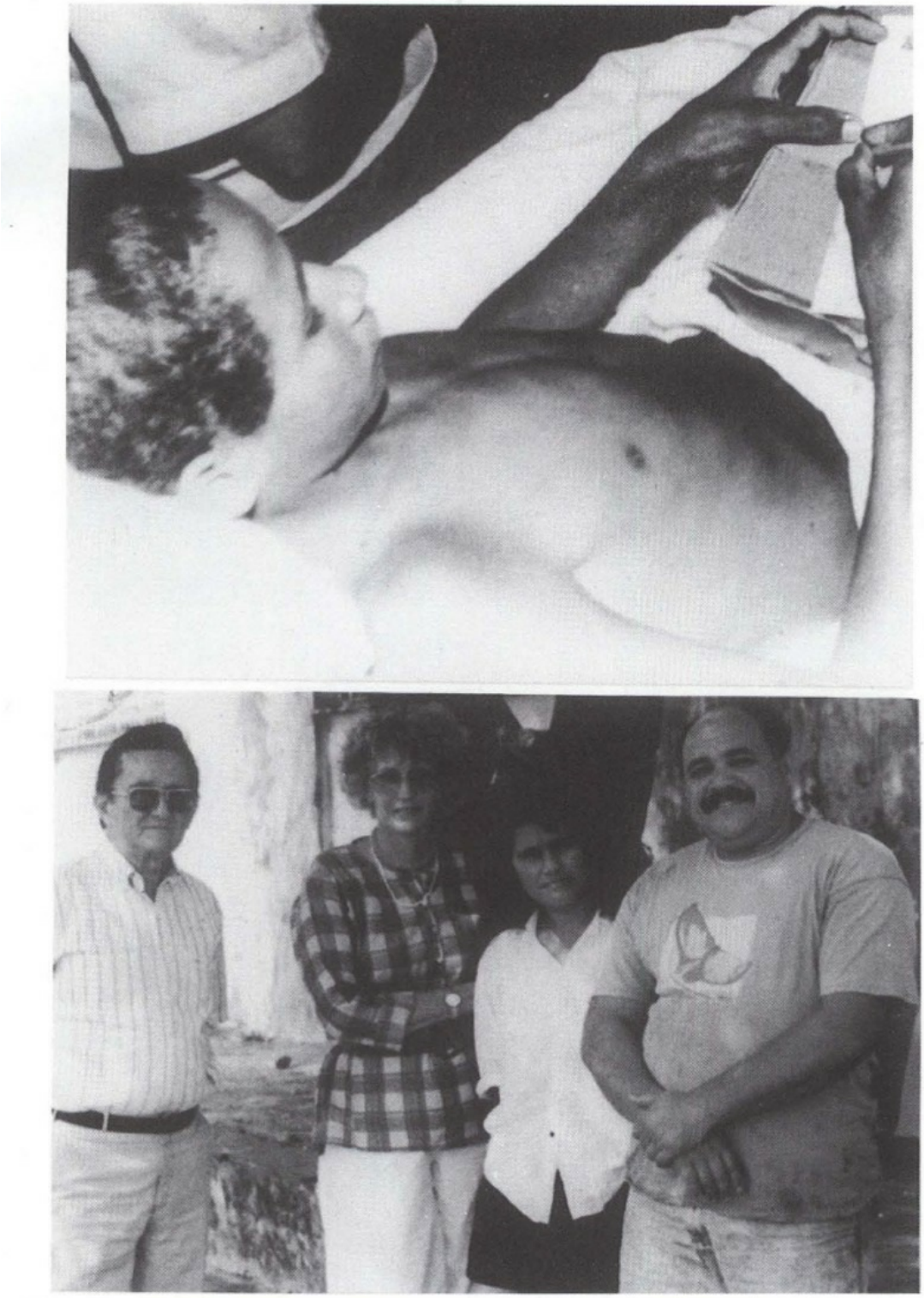

Top: Luis Carlos Serra recuperates in hospital after three-day abduction. Bottom: Reinar and Alzerina Silva (on right) standing next to UFO investigators Reginaldo Athayde and Cynthia Luce.

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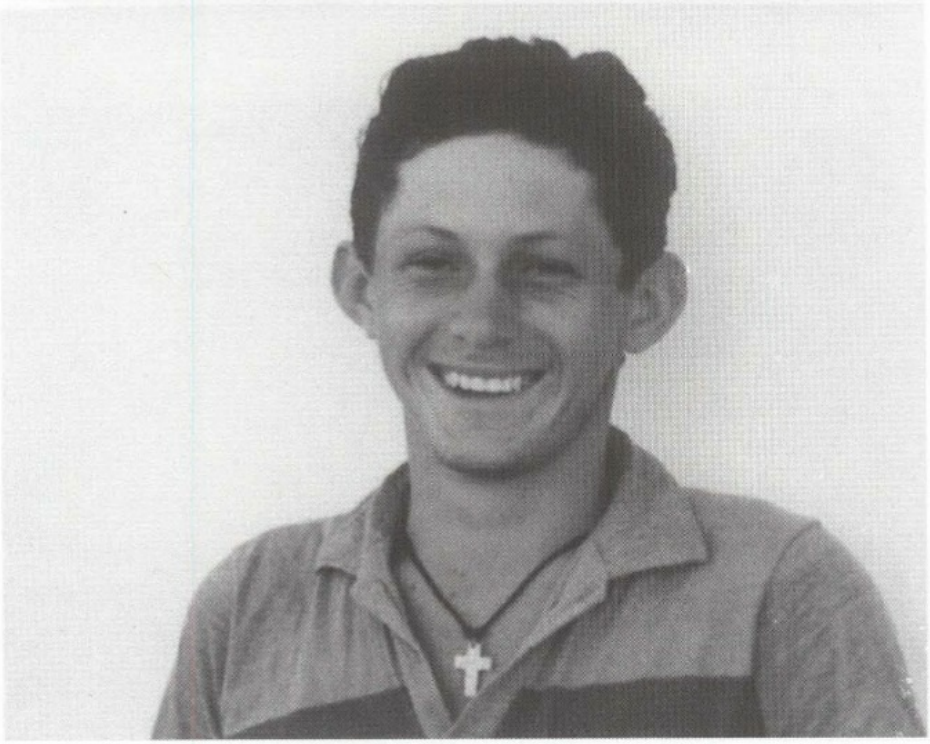

Top: UFO investigators Hulvio Aleixo and Cynthia Luce talk to Hermelindo Da Silva's wife, Maria.
Bottom: Jerinaldo Dantes in 1992, one year after harrowing UFO experience.

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Top: Sebastiani Sales saw UFO hovering over Jerinaldo.
Bottom: Firmino Souza lies unconscious in hospital after Crab Island incident.

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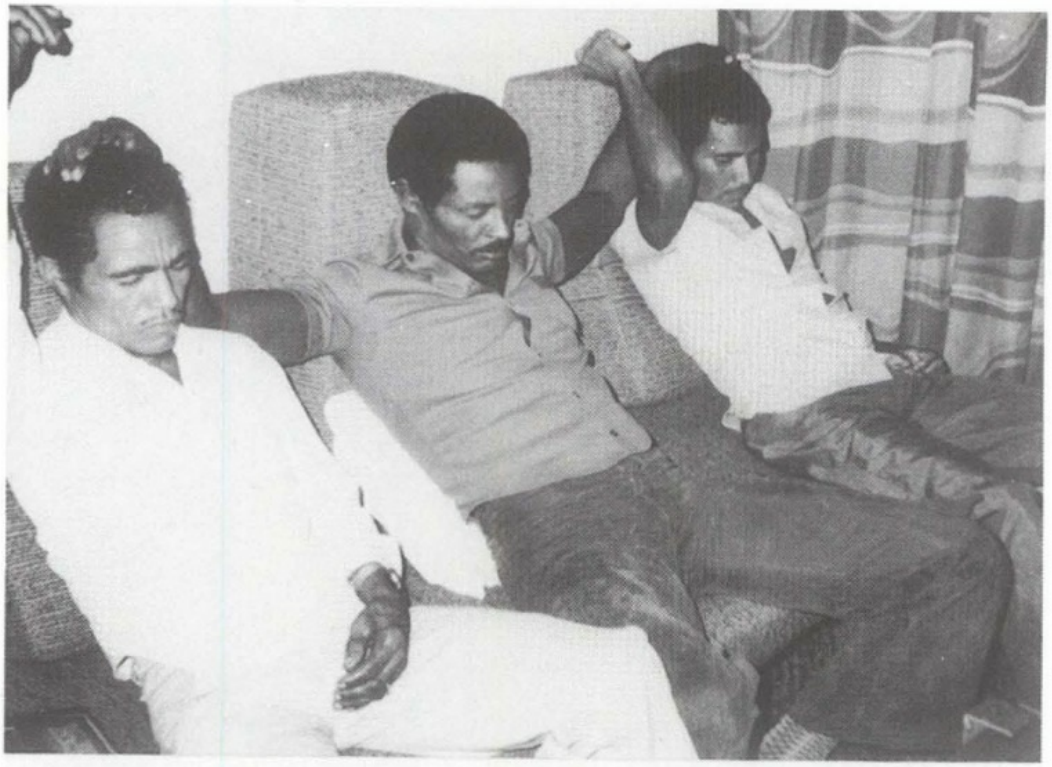

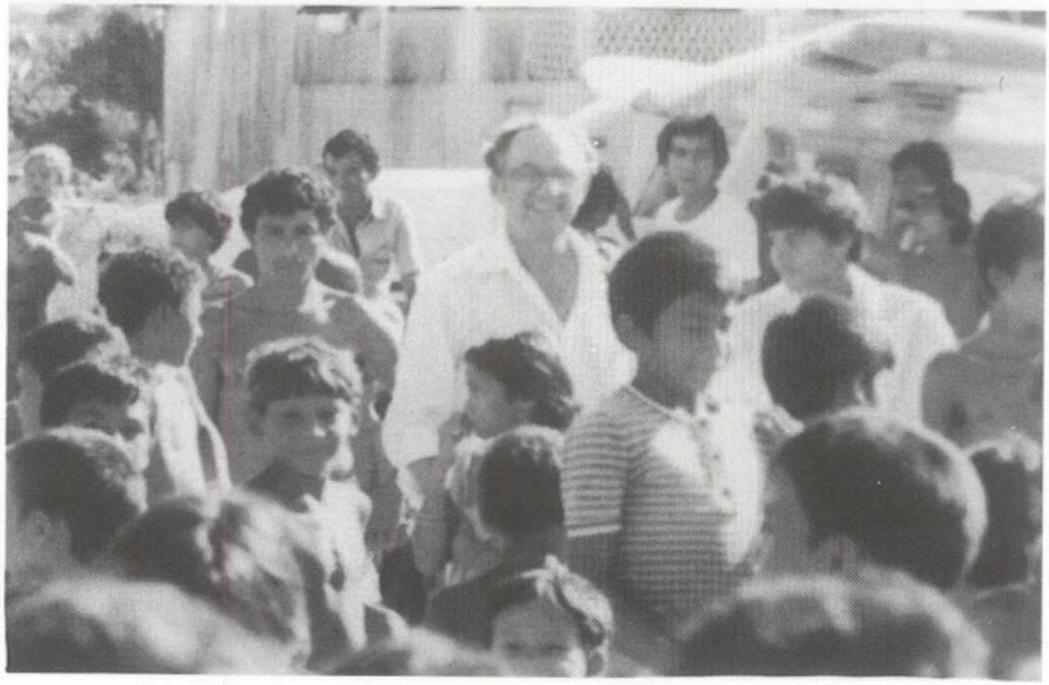

Top: Apolinario Souza, Auleriano Bisp Alves (a cousin) and brother Firmino Souza were placed under hypnosis by Dr. Silvio Lago.
Bottom: Crowd that greeted author's plane in Colares (1981).

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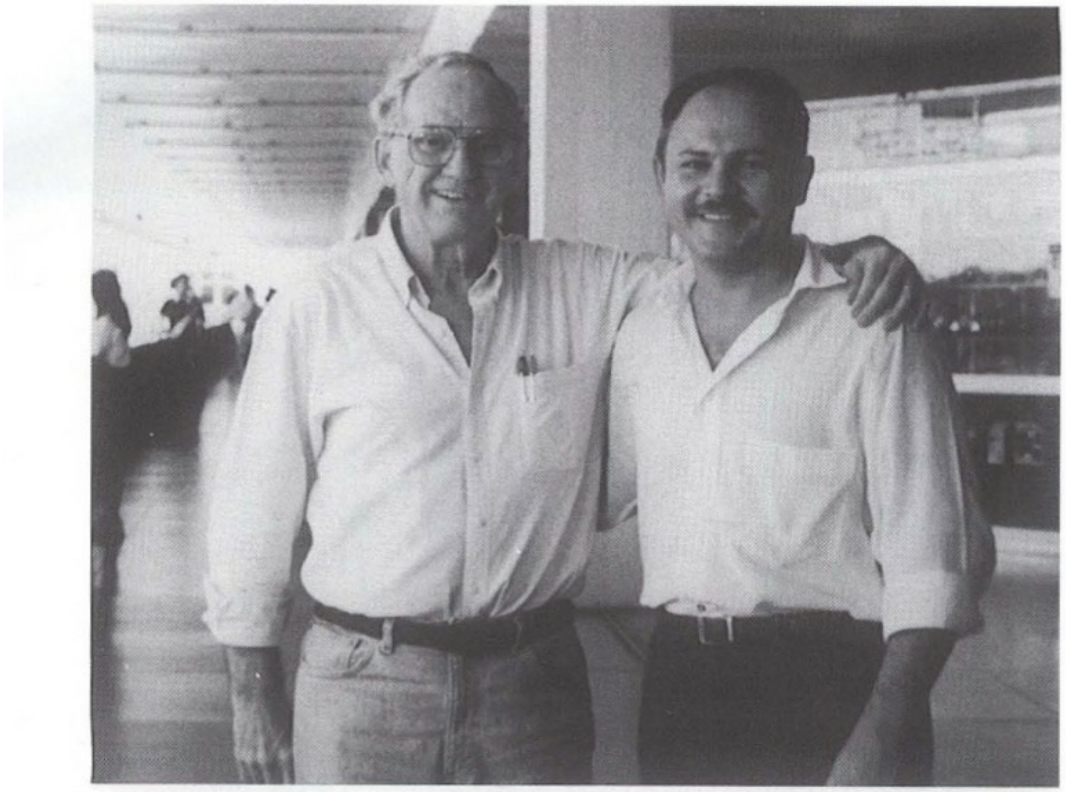

Top: Author Pratt with UFO investigator Daniel Rebisso.
Bottom: Tree struck by UFO beam during Jerinaldo Dantes' encounter.

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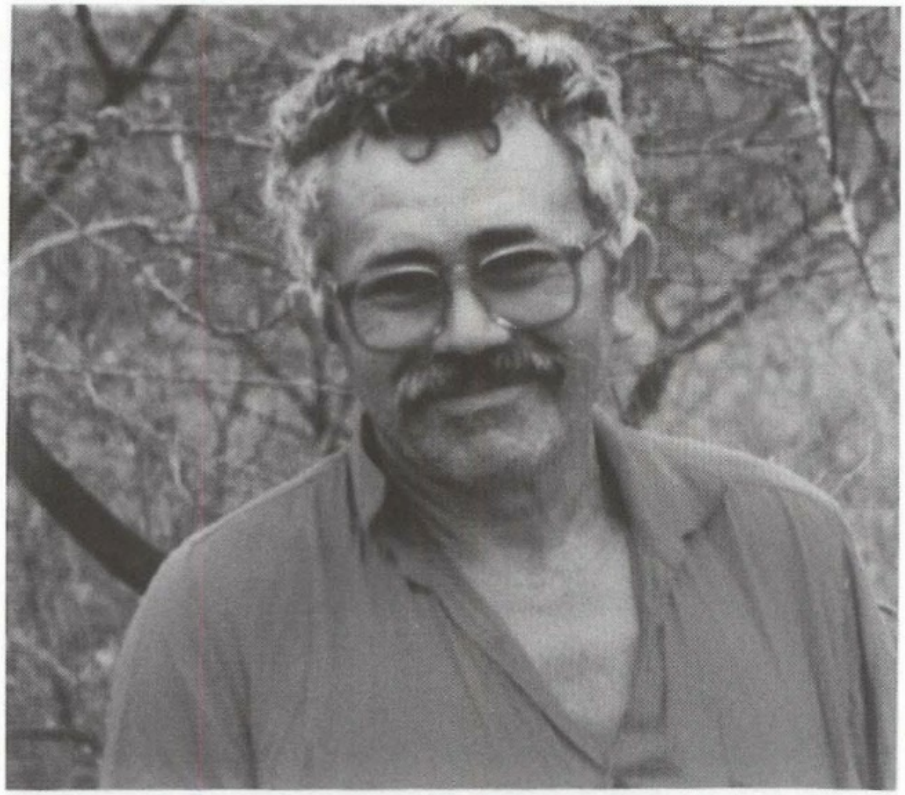

Top: Sandoval Bezerro hid from a UFO.
Bottom: Charred upper part of tree Jerinaldo Dantes hid beneath.

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Top: Major Uyrange Hollanda and author Pratt.
Bottom: Leonel Dos Santos never saw UFO that abducted him for four hours.

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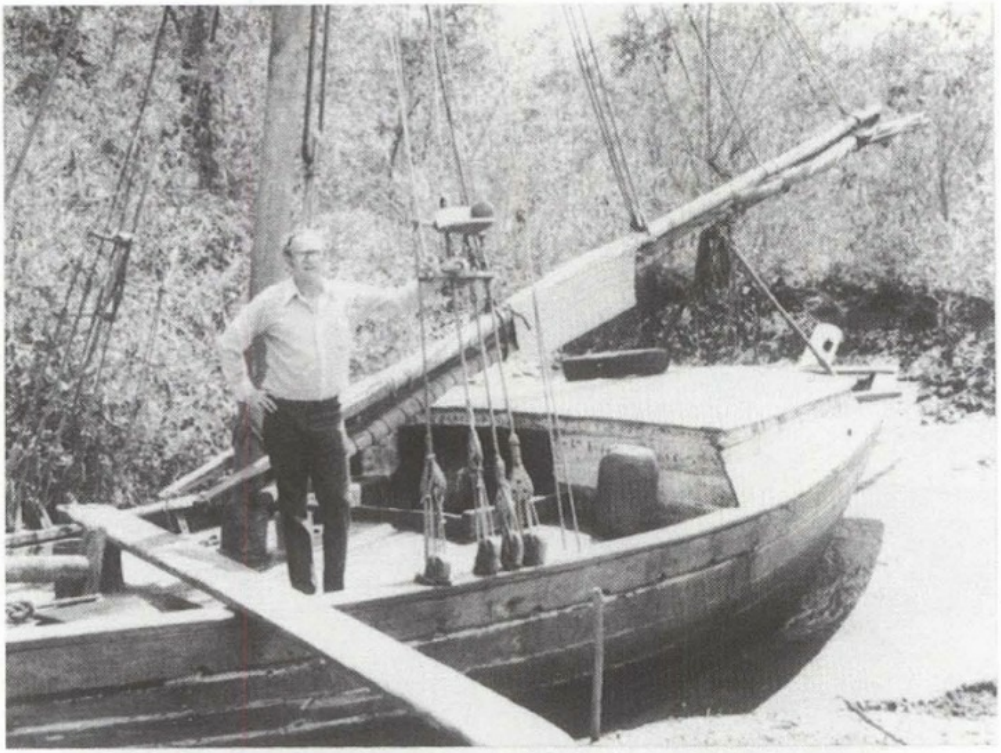

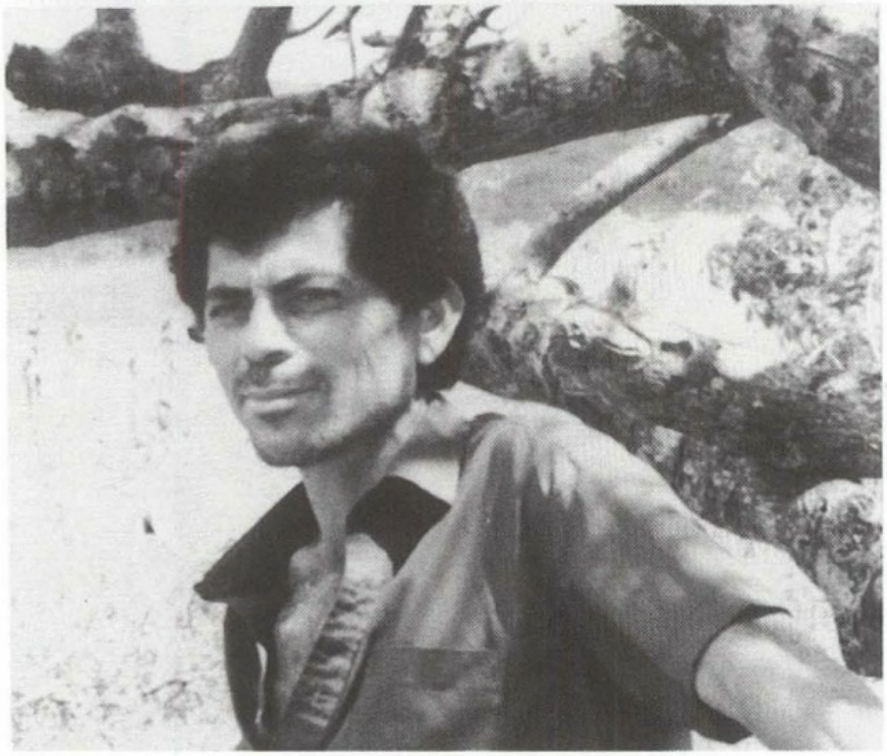

Top: Ill-fated boat Maria Rosa was inspected by author.
Bottom: Moises Campelo was pulled off ground twice by UFO in 1991.

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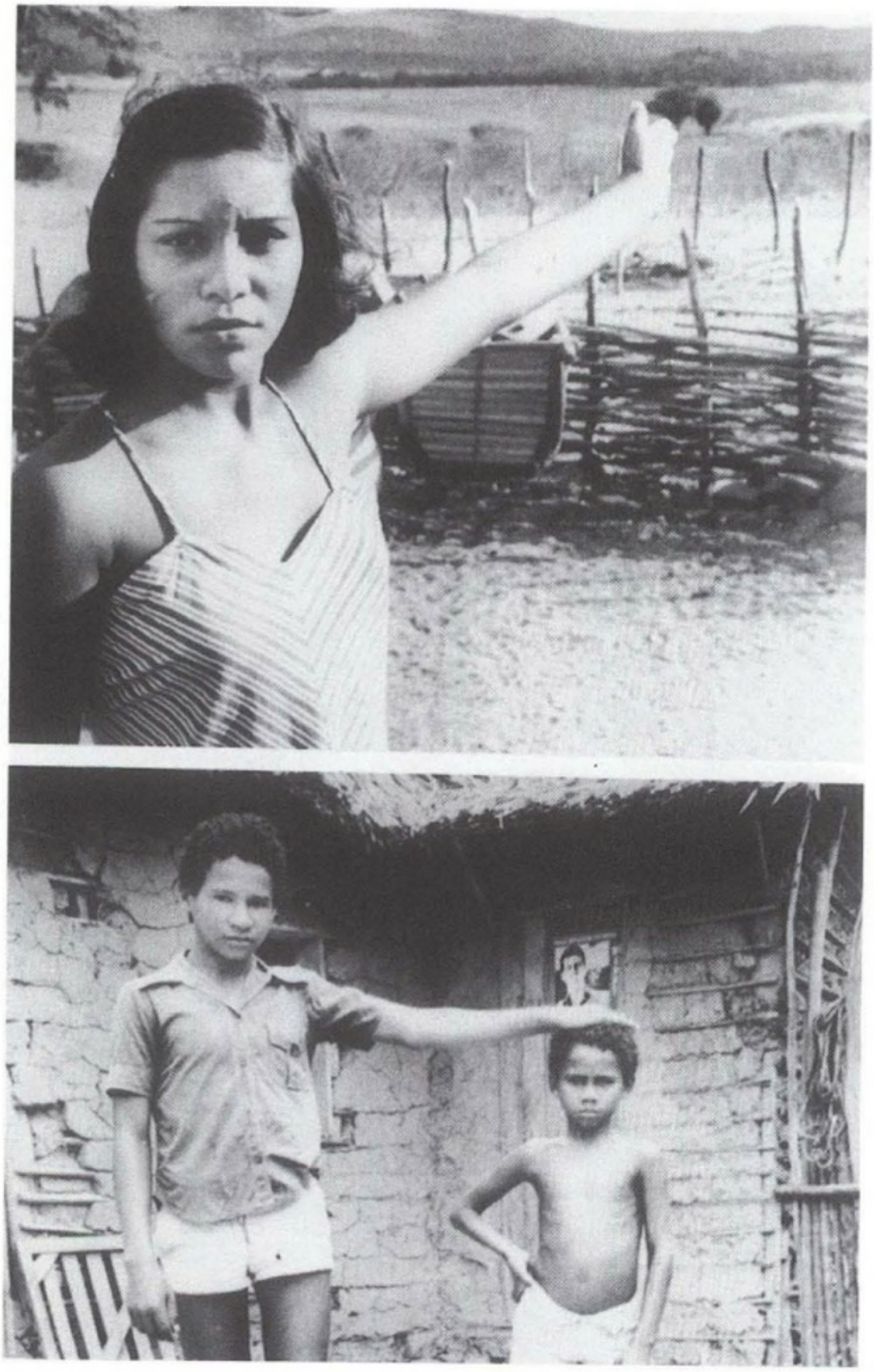

Top: Raimunda Da Silva was struck down by light from UFO.
Bottom: Luis Carlos Serra shows how tall his three ET abductors were.

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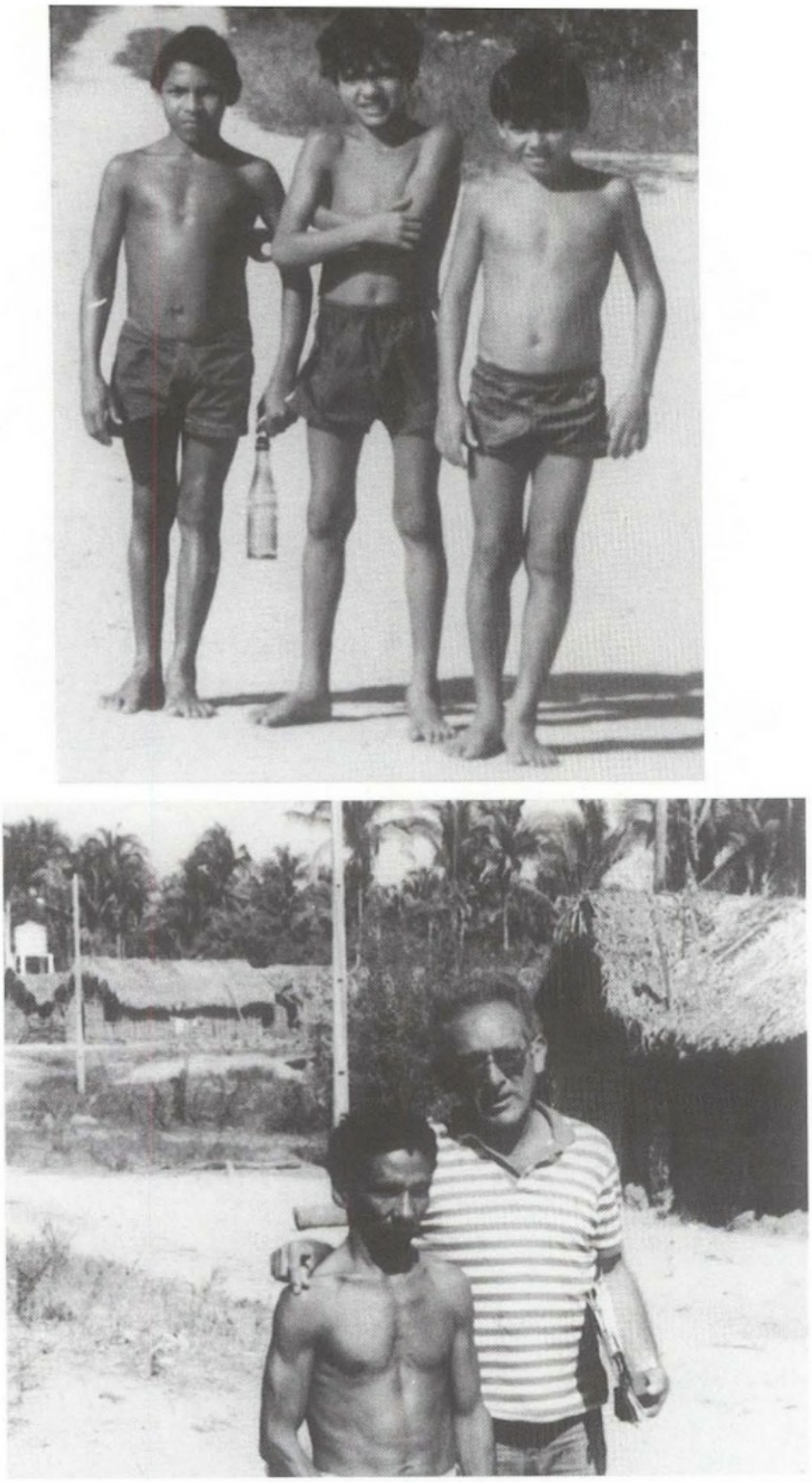

Top: Boys standing in churchyard by Colares "landing strip" (1981).
Bottom: Jose Cosmo (left) with investigator Jean Alencar. Jose's two close encounters included a broken leg.

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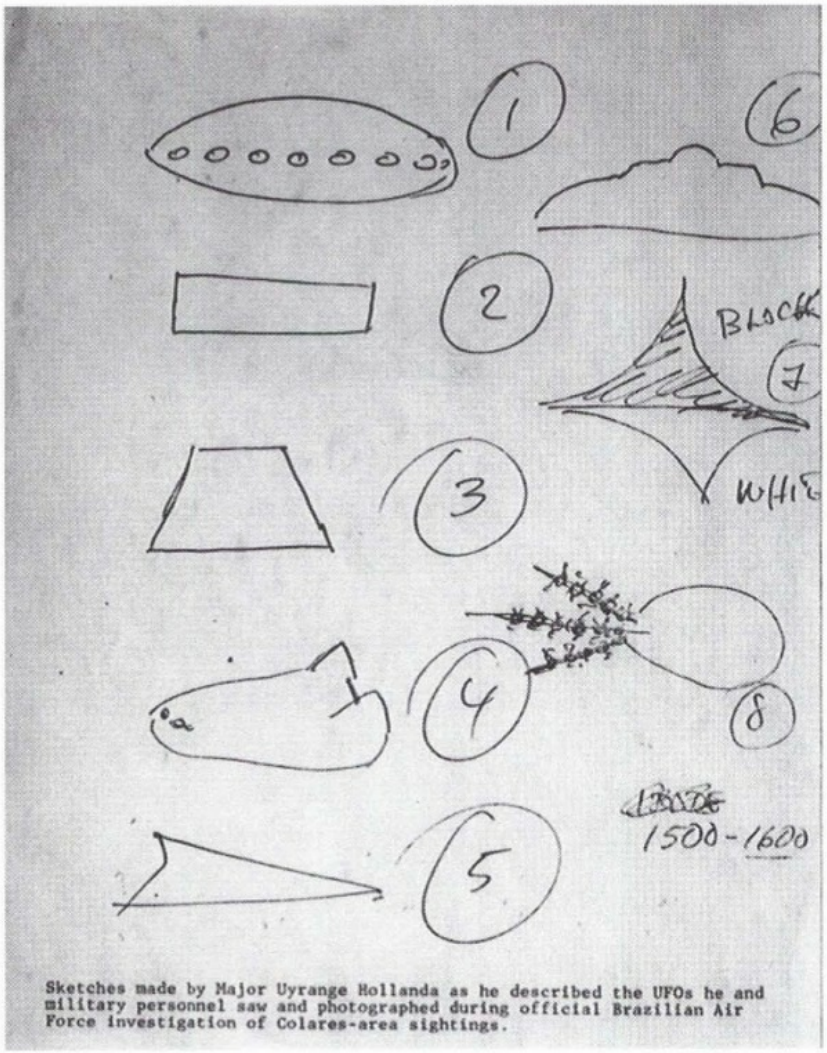

Sketches made by Major Uyrange Hollanda as he described the UFOs he and military personnel saw and photographed during official Brazilian Air Force investigation of Colares-area sightings.

Sketches made by Major Uyrange Hollanda as he described the UFOs he and military personnel saw and photographed during official Brazilian Air Force investigation in the Colares Area.

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PART THREE

SNATCHED

Chapter Twelve

ZAP ME AGAIN...PLEASE

Jose Benedito Bogea thought he was going to die after a UFO zapped him, but he wants it to come back and do it again.

"I was crippled for two months," he said but claimed the painful encounter was "wonderful and very beautiful."

Bogea is a hard-working farmer who started with very little and became relatively prosperous. He lives four miles southwest of Pinheiro in the state of Maranhao.[1] He's a short, spare man with jet-black hair and dark, blazing eyes who speaks in a loud voice, quickly and animatedly, gesturing frequently. He's been deaf for years.

His "wonderful" experience started when he was walking to Pinheiro about one o'clock one morning to catch a bus.

"I had a flashlight because it was so dark," Bogea said. "Suddenly, a bright, greenish-blue light appeared in the sky and chased me for about two hundred meters. Then it circled over a bush in front of me and stayed there, three or four meters above the ground, for just a fraction of a second. I could see a Vee-shaped thing fifteen to twenty meters long, with a beam of orange light going down to the ground.

"I raised my arm and shined my flashlight at it, and in an instant I saw a bright flash of light. It knocked me down, and I felt like I'd had an electrical shock. Then I passed out."

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He regained consciousness the next morning and several hours later began to feel a lot of pain.

"My right arm was completely numb, my kidneys, my spine, my right side all hurt very, very much. I thought I was going to die. I had no appetite for eight days. I didn't want to eat anything. I had to use a cane because I couldn't stand on my right leg, and I couldn't hold anything in my right hand because it would fall out of my hand."

Strange City

That's only the beginning of his story. The severe injury itself makes the encounter notable, but three even more significant things occurred, lifting the experience into a rare category of its own. First was the "dream."

"After passing out, I woke up in a strange city with wide avenues and beautiful gardens," Bogea said. "I looked for the sun, but I didn't see it. I didn't see any sky at all, just empty space."

He saw many people in the city. They looked very much alike, all about thirty years old, five feet tall and slender. All were dressed in gray and brown clothes, a few in light blue. The women wore long gowns, the men tunics and trousers.

"They looked like us," Bogea said. "They appeared to be Brazilians, but there were no black people and no old people. Most were light-skinned and had eyes of different colors, blue, brown. The women were pretty and had long blond hair. All the men had short hair, beards and mustaches.

"The people looked like they were talking to each other, but I couldn't hear anything. At one time one of them motioned for me to enter a large room. There were fifteen to twenty people in there who stood and looked at me. Another man gestured for me to sit on a sofa."

Bogea sat there for a while, being observed, and then

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was allowed to leave. He walked around the city. Everywhere he went, a man followed a few steps behind him.

None of the buildings was more than one story high, and they all looked alike. The temperature was uniformly cool everywhere, as if the entire city was air conditioned. Wherever Bogea went, the people looked at him, but no one said anything to him or came close to him.

He saw a number of vehicles that looked like Volkswagen Beetles but they had no motors or steering wheels.[2] Inside each he could see two people who would push buttons, causing antennas to go up or down.

He also saw about twenty disc-shaped objects on the ground in an area that looked to him like an airport. He believes they were UFOs, but none was like the triangular one that zapped him. He's convinced that the triangular UFO took him to the strange city, but he doesn't remember seeing it there.

Bogea doesn't know how long he was in the city. His visit came to an abrupt end when the man who was following him motioned for him to get into one of the "Volkswagens." When he did, he immediately fell asleep.

Then came the second unusual development. When Bogea woke up again, he found himself standing next to a highway near the deep-water seaport of Itaqui eight miles west of Sao Luis, the state capital. It was eight-thirty the next morning, some seven hours after he was zapped.

Sao Luis is a long way from Pinheiro. It's an hour's drive to a ferry terminal at Itauna on the western side of the Bay of Sao Marcos, then a two-hour ferryboat ride across the bay, followed by another fifteen-minute drive into Sao Luis. A trip can take many hours more because the ferry runs only during high tides, and passengers often have long waits.

Painful Recuperation

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When Bogea woke up next to the highway, everything around him seemed to be in bright, vivid colors. He was puzzled to find himself there but decided to go into Sao Luis, a city he is familiar with, and he hitched a ride with a truck driver. After he'd been in the city an hour or so, all the dazzling colors faded to normal — and for the first time he began to feel terrible pain in the right side of his body.

"I thought I was going to die," Bogea said. "I felt so bad I wanted to go to a hospital, but I didn't want to leave my children alone."

His wife had died several years earlier, and his four children were by themselves. An acquaintance helped him get onto a bus to go back home. When it arrived in Pinheiro, he was in such misery that he had to ask a taxi driver to help him get into the taxi to go to his house.

He spent two months at home recuperating and was able to walk only with the aid of a cane.

With all his suffering, Bogea should have been one of those people who'd be afraid to go outside at night. But he was actually very pleased by what had happened to him, and he prays for the UFO to come back and do it to him again.

For good reason, which brings us to the third significant occurrence. Thirteen years earlier, a doctor operated on his nose because he'd been suffering from severe headaches. The operation cured the headaches, but it left him deaf and so impaired his eyesight that he'd had to wear very thick glasses ever since.

Until his encounter with the UFO, that is.

"When I saw the object and passed out, I lost my glasses," Bogea explained. "But it wasn't until I got home the next day that I realized I'd lost them. Since then I haven't needed to wear glasses anymore."

The incident took place on the night of July 10, 1977. Throughout my interview with him in his home in December
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1978, the interpreter, Angela Hadade, would write my questions on a legal pad and hand the pad to him. He'd read the questions very quickly and promptly answer in a torrent of words.

"I can also hear a little now," Bogea continued. "I can hear dogs bark and car horns, and sometimes I can hear the telephone ring or if you shout or scream. Now I want to meet these people again so I can be cured of my deafness. I think it was wonderful and very beautiful, even though I felt a lot of pain. I think what I saw was not of this world."

Angela asked him if it was possible he'd just dreamed about the strange city.

"Well, it could be," he replied thoughtfully, "but I am so sure of what I saw in that city that I'm almost sure I wasn't dreaming."

Bogea's story took yet another strange twist a year and a half later. In July 1981, I went back to Pinheiro to see how he was doing. He remembered me immediately — but he was wearing thick glasses again.

"In July last year," he explained, "I was riding in a car that was hit broadside by a truck. I was unconscious for forty hours. I was in a hospital for a month and, ever since the accident, I've had to wear glasses again. And I can't hear anything anymore, not even very loud sounds."

Underground Base

Jose Benedito Bogea had a remarkable experience. He's convinced he was taken to a city that doesn't sound like anything we know of on this earth. There's no way of knowing how much of what he remembers is true. His recall included many particulars not included here, a profusion of details so great that it's hard to believe it could have been only a dream.

If it wasn't a dream, does the "city" really exist or was

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it a "memory" created and somehow implanted in his mind by his UFO abductors? Or does it exist in some other world, some other universe?

Bogea is not the only person to claim to have been taken to a strange city or location during an abduction. Many researchers have heard similar stories. In four other cases I've investigated, the descriptions of the cities vary greatly but only one is somewhat like Bogea's.

In Puerto Rico a man told me he had been taken by a UFO to a large underground base where he saw dozens of disc-shaped craft and hundreds of small humanoid beings. Reports of underground bases crop up from time to time, and they're intriguing, but we have no evidence that they actually exist. If they do, they could explain why Bogea and several others saw no sky in the places they were taken to.

Bogea's experience is exceptional for two other reasons: His being transported from Pinheiro to Sao Luis and his sharply improved eyesight.

When he woke up for good, he was more than seventy miles from where he was abducted. Such "misplacement" has been reported in a few other UFO cases, although not many. The aliens either forgot where they picked Bogea up or they deliberately left him a long way from home, perhaps to make sure he knew something unusual had happened to him.

The first thing he saw when the UFO appeared was a bright bluish-green light, which is commonly seen in Brazilian sightings and was the color of the light given off by the object that harassed Jerinaldo under the tree near Acari.

Bogea's encounter came at a time when UFOs were seen almost every night for four months around Pinheiro. UFOs appeared so frequently that one official estimated fifty thousand people in the region had seen them. It was a time when many people reported being exposed to a sudden burst of brilliant light overhead and then being chased by the

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lighted object, with some of them being burned.

The beam of light that injured Bogea sounds similar to the one that crippled Alfredo Marques Soares the same month, July 1977, near Cardeiros in Ceara, five hundred miles to the east. Bogea was crippled for two months, Soares for six.

Like a Stun Gun

Bogea was holding the flashlight in his right hand when he pointed it at the object, and the beam hit him on his right side. He felt a tingling sensation and passed out. The effects were similar to those of a stun gun. The ray didn't burn him, and he didn't feel its painful, crippling effect until seven or eight hours later. If his flashlight was perceived as a threat, then it's possible the aliens zapped him to prevent his attacking them.

The vivid, almost psychedelic colors that Bogea saw upon awakening near Sao Luis may have been part of the stunning effect of the beam of light, much like seeing stars when getting hit on the head. Perhaps he was anesthetized in some way, delaying the painful effects. He felt no such sensations when he was in the strange city, no pain, and saw no extraordinary colors.

Another unusual aspect was that he saw a Vee- shaped object behind the bluish-green light. UFOs of this shape are not commonly reported in Brazil. In several hundred cases I've investigated there, only five involved triangular UFOs.

Bogea's abduction is somewhat typical of the abductions that researchers were hearing about in the 1960s and 1970s, when people sometimes described beautiful cities, wide avenues and curious, non-menacing people. This is far different from the seemingly more sinister abductions being reported in the 1990s in the United States, Puerto Rico and some other countries. In these cases, people tell of being

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repeatedly removed from their homes or wherever and subjected to examinations for sexual and possibly genetic purposes, leaving them feeling violated and angry because they're unable to do anything about it or keep it from happening again and again.

In Bogea's abduction, he thought the strange city was beautiful but was puzzled by the fact that there was no sky above it, just emptiness. Witnesses in two other cases have told me somewhat similar tales. In Mendoza, Argentina, a man and his grown son who were abducted found themselves driving down a broad boulevard through an all- red city with buildings so high they never saw the sky. The other case, which will be discussed in the next chapter, involved a young man who was abducted only fifty miles south of Pinheiro. He saw nothing but blackness above him.

One more point about Bogea's case is that he said the people in the strange city looked like Brazilians, but there were no black people nor any old people among them. This is interesting because a large percentage of the people in Brazil have brown skin of one shade or another, and of course there are plenty of old people, as in any country. If he were taken some place, it wasn't in Brazil.

All of this — the city with no sky, the people who all looked much alike, the "Volkswagens" that had no motors or steering wheels — sounds like a show of some kind staged for Bogea's benefit. But for what purpose? Not to let us know "they" are here. He told his story to a number of people in Pinheiro but some didn't believe him. They don't call him a liar. They just don't believe it happened.

Bogea admits it could have been a dream, but he remembered it so vividly, even on my second visit two and a half years after the first, that he's convinced it wasn't a dream. And if it were a dream, why such a strange one, especially the part about there being no sky, things he had never seen before?

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Come zap me again, Bogea says to the UFOs. But he is virtually the lone exception among those who have had close encounters in Brazil. For others, their encounters were much more traumatic.

1. Peen-YAIR-roo, Mar-un-YOW.
2. A popular model then still being built in Brazil.

Chapter Thirteen

THEY TOOK HIS TEETH

All the people talked about so far who were pulled upward by a UFO were able to resist or were freed after going a short distance above the ground. But others were taken away, and some don't know what happened to them.

One of them is Luis Carlos Serra. He not only was levitated into a UFO and taken away for three days but also has a big blank in his memory. He can recall the first moments of his experience but nothing from then until ten days later, about a week after his abduction ended.

When he finally regained his senses, he said he'd been taken away to a strange land with no sky by three little men in a UFO. There was plenty of medical evidence to prove something extraordinary had happened to him, and his doctors were baffled. No one believed he was lying, and the mayor of his town said other people had seen a UFO the day Luis disappeared.

The incident began just after noon on Good Friday, March 24, 1978, near Penalva, a small town in the interior of Maranhao. Luis was then sixteen. It was after dark on the following Monday evening when Jose Dos Santos, who had been fishing nearby, heard a shout for help. He went into the jungle and found Luis lying on a path.

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Dos Santos, a short, stocky, middle-aged man, recognized Luis and knew he'd been missing because his mother had been looking for him.

"He seemed to be in a daze," Dos Santos said. "He didn't look like he was hurt, and he wasn't crying, but he couldn't move. I helped him up but he fell back down, so I carried him to my boat and brought him back to my house. He didn't say anything more after I heard him shouting."

A neighbor helped Dos Santos carry Luis to the home of his mother, Maria, a walk of about ten minutes. From there, at her request, the two men carried him across town to the tiny ten-bed Penalva hospital, which is operated by the state government. The staff at that time consisted of Dr. Linda Madeira, who is a general practitioner and gynecologist, and half a dozen nursing aides.

Four Teeth Missing

Dr. Macieira, thirty three, was in Sao Luis that night and didn't see Luis until she returned the following day.[1] A polite, serious doctor, she was never able to determine what was wrong with him.

"Luis was completely dumb and had muscle contractions, like he was paralyzed," she said as we sat at a table in the hospital ten months after the incident. "I thought when I first saw him that he was under the influence of marijuana or other drugs, but we found out he wasn't.

"Four teeth were missing, and we learned they'd been pulled out. Several were broken. Just one tooth was extracted completely, and the other three still had the roots in the mouth. All four were bleeding.

"People told me he had long hair before this happened, but he was completely bald. When I examined him closely, I could see that his hair had been burned off. His scalp wasn't burned but the tops of his ears were slightly burned, like a

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sunburn, and they smelled like they'd been burned. The hair was definitely burned off."

Luis' body was nearly rigid.

"I tried to move his arms and legs but couldn't," Dr. Macieira said. "I pricked them with a sharp pin to test his sensitivities, but he showed no reaction at all, no pain anywhere in his body. I examined his whole body and found no marks on him. His body was completely normal, no scars, nothing, just the teeth. He was breathing normally, and he had no unusual breath or body odor. I couldn't reach any conclusions as to what caused this condition in the boy. I have no idea what happened to him.

"He went nine days without eating. He had to be fed intravenously because he wouldn't eat or drink, not even water. He spent three days without going to the bathroom and had to be catheterized."

Before talking to Dr. Macieira, we had gone directly to Luis' home. He was alone. His mother had gone away for the day, his father lived in another town, and he had no brothers or sisters.

Luis was a shy, curly-headed youth, short and slender with pale, brown skin. By now he was seventeen but looked younger. Like most of the other kids in Penalva, he was barefoot and wearing only a pair of shorts. This part of Brazil is near the equator, and the weather is always warm.

Loud Noise

Luis was reluctant to talk, but once we convinced him we weren't going to make fun of him, he told us what happened. Angela Hadade was again interpreting, and we talked to him in the small, bare living room. Fifteen to twenty people had gathered around us, some hanging in the doors and windows.

"I was just inside the jungle west of town picking guava

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fruit when I heard a loud, sharp sound like a car horn," Luis said. "I got very scared. I looked up and saw a very big, bright light, bigger than the sun, about half a meter. It was right above the palm trees, round and white. It hurt my eyes, and I could look at it only for a moment.

"Suddenly, I fell flat on my back on the ground, and I couldn't move. I don't know why. I was paralyzed. The only thing I could do was hear and see. I laid on the ground for some time. Then I began to rise in the air, and now I could see an object above the trees. Something was pulling me up, but I don't know what. I was amazed. I couldn't see anything holding me, and nothing was touching me."

There was a note of wonder in his voice as he said this, still marveling at the fact that he rose into the air the way he did.

"It took only a few seconds," Luis said. "I wasn't afraid. I stared at the object as I was going up. It was round and had four round balls on the bottom, and one of them was lighted. When I got high enough, I could see a dome on top and three windows that went all the way around the dome.

"Only one window was open, and I just entered it head first. It was about a meter square. When I got inside, I fell down on the floor but not hard. It didn't seem very large inside, about the size of this room."

The living room was square, about ten feet by ten.

"I was lying on my back, still paralyzed, but I could look around. There were three little people in there. They were only about a meter tall. They were walking around, and they moved just like human beings. They didn't seem to pay any attention to me. I couldn't see their faces or skin. They were covered with what looked like aluminum, and glass covered their faces, but I couldn't see through the glass. Their bodies were just like ours, only smaller. They wore gloves and boots and had something like knapsacks on their backs about this

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big."

Luis held his hands about twelve inches apart.

"I didn't understand what they were saying to each other. Their voices were loud, but they weren't like human voices. They were very deep. I was lying on my back, and I still couldn't move, but I could look around. There were three chairs, like armchairs, of aluminum. The arms were made of rubber. They were facing the wall. The wall was white, and there was nothing on the wall."

Luis saw something like dials but didn't know what they were. He saw no tables, benches or desks but there were many white lights, and the floor was smooth.

No Sky

The object soon began moving, he said. "I couldn't feel us moving but I knew we were. It made a noise like a very loud machine. I was taken to a strange land with no trees and just tall grass. I don't know how long it took us to get there. I went out of the window the same way I went in, on my back with nothing holding me up. I was still paralyzed.

"It was a strange place that I didn't know. It looked like a field but without any birds or lakes. The grass was very tall, about half a meter. I never saw any buildings, I couldn't see the sky or any trees, and I couldn't see any stars. It was just very dark up there."

After he floated out of the craft, he came to rest on a smooth "stone" as flat as a table.

"I was still paralyzed," Luis said. "Then these little people came to me and put a tube in my nose. It didn't hurt. Then they put a transparent ball in my mouth, and the liquid just went down my throat very quickly. I fell asleep then, and I don't know what happened after that until I woke up in the jungle."

The sun had set, and it was dark when he awakened,

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about seven in the evening three days and seven hours after it all began. Luis was lying in the same area where he'd been knocked down, but how long he'd been lying there, no one knows.

"I started shouting," he said. "I didn't remember anything after that. I couldn't speak for a long time, and the first day I couldn't hear, either. I tried hard to speak but I couldn't. It was about fifteen days before I felt right again. I went eight or ten days without eating after it was over. I wondered what happened to me but I wasn't afraid."

Dr. Macieira first examined Luis on Tuesday, March 28, and three days later he was flown to a much larger hospital in Sao Luis, the state capital about a hundred miles to the northeast. Luis remembers waking up on the jungle floor and shouting, but nothing more until seven days later. He knows he was found by the fisherman, Dos Santos, but only because his mother told him that.

Neurologist Puzzled

When Angela and I finished with all our interviews, we flew back to Sao Luis in a hired Cessna that had taken us to Penalva, and the next day we set out to talk to the other doctors who had treated Luis at Serme Hospital in Sao Luis. The hospital's records listed at least half a dozen physicians who had examined or treated him, but we could locate only three, the rest having moved on to other cities.

One doctor, Antonio Saldanho, was especially helpful. He is a neurologist and speaks fluent English. Although he examines a number of patients every day, and nearly a year had passed since he'd last seen Luis, he readily recalled treating him.

"I thought it was a very strange case because in my examination I couldn't find any abnormal neurological responses," Dr. Saldanho said. "Luis was found in a state as if he were scared, frightened. He couldn't talk. I wouldn't say

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it was aphasia, which is an impossibility to talk, but he wasn't able to talk.

"He was a 'locked-in' patient. That's just an expression. He was awake, his eyes were open, fixed, like a fixed stare, but he wasn't able to talk, and he didn't respond to verbal commands. You ask him to lift his hand or his arms, he didn't respond. Simple requests like 'Open your mouth' or 'Close your eyes,' he didn't do that. He wasn't able to. And his reflexes were normal. He had no abnormal response, not in terms of neurological signs. It seemed to me he had a mental problem.

"Something had scared him. As a neurologist, in all that time I wasn't able to explain why he had that clinical picture. I couldn't find any signal in the neurological examination which would justify what he had at that time. All the time I saw him, he had a fixed stare, as if frightened.

"He didn't eat the first few days and had to be fed intravenously. He wasn't able to swallow food. It was very strange because he didn't have any reaction to food. If you showed him food, he was completely indifferent. The same with water, so we were obliged to give him fluids.

"I couldn't see any skull injury, no fractures. His bone structure was not harmed. He had no muscle weakness. He was not in a coma, and he was breathing well. He didn't have any fever, no elevated temperature at all.

"I did a cardiological checkup and found nothing unusual. His pulse rate, the cardiac rate and everything was normal. He had no reaction to painful stimuli. There was no way he could have faked those symptoms. Something had shocked the boy. It was a very strange case. I have never seen anything like it, and I called for a psychiatrist because I couldn't find any neurological problem."

Examined by Psychiatrists

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As it turned out, Luis was examined by two psychiatrists. The first was Dr. Renato Bacelar, who told us in his office: "I tried to break his story about a UFO a number of times, but I didn't succeed. He repeated the story without variation each time. He could be telling the truth."

Unable to determine what was wrong with Luis, Dr. Bacelar asked another psychiatrist, Dr. Bacelar Viana, a cousin, to look at him. So, Angela and I went to Dr. Viana's office.

"There is no doubt the boy believes the story he is telling is true," Dr. Viana told us, but added that he himself didn't believe it. Instead, he thought Luis might have been the victim of a homosexual attack and that his shocked mind, unable to accept such an attack, made up the story about the UFO.

Dr. Viana had nothing to back up his theory, but then he said: "Besides, a UFO wouldn't do that."

Why wouldn't a UFO do that, we asked.

"Because if they are able to come all the way here, they wouldn't be that crude," he replied, which evidently meant that he believed UFOs come from somewhere else in the universe.

Sketches UFO and Aliens

Luis began coming out of his paralysis on the third day he was in the Sao Luis hospital. He still wasn't able to talk yet, but gestured for paper and pencil. Then he began to write about the strange encounter he had with the tiny UFO beings. He also drew sketches of a disc-shaped craft and its occupants.

When he regained use of his voice, he told the same story over and over again, exactly the same each time.

When Luis began walking again, he had to practice for several days because he was unsteady on his feet. On April

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7, he was discharged and sent home.

Joao Francisco Mendes, then the mayor of Penalva, has a second home in Sao Luis, and it was there that Angela and I found Mendes several days later. He was holding court on the porch of his home, talking with several other residents of Penalva about town business.

Mendes, a short, businesslike, middle-aged man, believed Luis' story. "Luis is not the type of boy to make up a story like that," he said. "He's a very normal person. He always has been, and he's honest. He never uses drugs as far as I know, and he's never been in trouble with the police. His mother didn't report him missing to the police. She was out looking for him every day. He was missing for four days, and the neighbors knew he was missing.

"Many people in Penalva saw the UFO the day the boy disappeared, on Good Friday. It was like a fire."

As unusual as Luis' story is, it has some elements in common with so many other UFO reports. The most interesting aspect to me was that he was levitated some eighty feet into the air and into a UFO that was hovering above the coconut trees.

At the time Luis told us about being levitated, it didn't mean a great deal to me. Its importance became clear only years later after I had talked to a number of other people who had been subjected to an invisible, upward pull from UFOs. It means that UFO aliens can indeed use this powerful tool to take someone away if they so choose.

Furthermore, once the UFO reached the strange land with no sky, the same force was used to float Luis out of the UFO and onto a flat surface, where the aliens gave him something to swallow that knocked him out for three days. Most likely the same force was used to return him to the UFO and then down to the ground after he was taken back to the jungle.

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Unlike some of the other witnesses, Luis felt no wind, no coldness nor any heat when he was rising up to the UFO.

In the beginning, the aliens must have zapped him in some unseen fashion because he was knocked flat on his back as he stood looking up at the bright light, and once on the ground, he felt paralyzed, able only to hear and move his eyes.

Must Have Had Nourishment

We shall probably never know what happened to Luis during the three days he was gone. For whatever reason, his hair was burned off -- without burning his scalp, although his ears were slightly singed as if sunburned -- and four teeth were broken off or removed.

The aliens must have given him some nourishment during the three days he was missing, because he showed no signs of starving or fasting and had to be fed intravenously for nearly a week after being found. For most of the eleven days he was in the two hospitals, he showed no interest in food or water at all.

What would account for his paralysis, fixed stare and general condition? Dr. Macieira, a neurologist, two psychiatrists and all the other physicians couldn't determine the cause. Something unusual happened to him, something profoundly traumatic because Luis was catatonic for nearly a week after he was found.

One psychiatrist theorized that Luis was homosexually raped and that, unable to cope with such a thing, his mind made up the story about the UFO. Yet the doctor had no evidence that this happened. If Luis had been raped, he must have struggled and should have had scratches or bruises on him. Yet Dr. Macieira found no marks on him.

Furthermore, Luis was virtually bald when Dr. Macieira examined him, and she concluded that his hair had been

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burned off without burning his scalp. It seems to me that this would be extremely difficult for any human to do that without burning his scalp, and especially someone who was raping a youngster in the forest. Also, why would a rapist burn his hair off and pull out or break off four molars? And how would that account for Luis' being unconscious for three days and immobile for several more?

It might have been helpful to have had Luis put under hypnosis to see if that would help him remember what happened, but qualified hypnotists are rare in the interior. The physician I would like to have used lived sixteen hundred miles away, near Rio de Janeiro, and the cost of getting the two together made it impractical.

A Nothingness Above

The three little beings that Luis saw in the UFO are similar to those commonly reported in encounters throughout the world. The fact that they were covered from head to toe and that their faces couldn't be seen is also typical of creatures reported by other witnesses, in and out of Brazil. The beings spoke a language Luis couldn't understand, in unusually deep voices, and they paid no attention to him, indicating perhaps that they knew he was so helpless they weren't worried about what he might do.

The strange land with no trees or sky is similar to what Bogea reported in the last chapter, except that Luis saw a black nothingness above him and Bogea a daylight nothingness. Both may have been inside something enormously huge and covered. If what Bogea and Luis saw was not an illusion, they had to have been taken some place. Where that could be, we don't know. We can only speculate.

In Penalva the day I interviewed Luis, the last question I asked was how he felt now. "I feel all right," he said. "The only thing different is that I feel I'm more intelligent now."

Others who've had close encounters with UFO beings

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have also felt they were a little more intelligent as a result. Luis doesn't know what happened after he passed out in the strange land, but he does know how it all started. Not everyone who's been taken away is even that fortunate, as the next victim will show.

1. Ma-see-AlR-uh.

Chapter Fourteen

A BROKEN MAN

Luis Serra was missing for three days and wasn't aware of anything around him for a week after, but he emerged none the worse for wear. Leonel Dos Santos was missing only four hours, and it ruined his life.

Leonel was forty-eight when I first met him. At that time he owned a farm of one-hundred-thirty acres with cattle, goats, sheep, horses and burros. Today he owns virtually nothing.

The encounter that changed his life occurred on July 27, 1979. He never saw the UFO, only a large shadow that fell over him.

"It happened about seven in the morning in broad daylight on my farm when two friends and I were trying to get some wood to build a small house," Leonel told me six months later. A slender, mild-mannered man, he appeared to be very tired or ill during the interview at the sheriff's office in Lajes, Rio Grande do Norte.

"The other two men stopped to eat some breakfast. I wasn't hungry, so I wandered off looking at trees. A little while later I was standing in the middle of a dry river bed, looking at trees."

Leonel had been carrying a foice, a big curved knife

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with a long wooden handle similar to a scythe, when he glimpsed something moving behind the trees. He stopped, stuck the blade in the sand and was leaning on the handle as he tried to figure out what he'd seen.

"Suddenly a big, black shadow covered the ground around me," he said. "I felt cold and numb, and I looked at the ground in surprise. I turned to look up and see what it was, but I seemed kind of paralyzed. I could feel my eyes rolling back in my head and my feet went up in front of me, like a backward somersault. Then I passed out. I didn't see what was above me."

He came to four hours later, dizzy and very sick.

"I didn't know where I was," Leonel said. "I was cold and had a bad headache, terrible thirst, pains in my chest and a bitter taste in my mouth. My mouth was very dry, like cotton. I couldn't hear anything in my right ear. I started wandering around in the woods without knowing where I was going. After a while I heard a train, found the railroad tracks and realized I was on the farm next to mine."

He slowly made his way back to where his two friends, Jose Francisco Da Silva and Severino Cosme, were gathering wood. They had searched for him but found only a mystery.

"He'd disappeared," Jose said. "I whistled and called but he didn't answer. We went looking for him and followed his footprints in the river bed. We found his *foice* sticking in the ground, and his footprints just stopped there. They just stopped. It was very puzzling."

Jose and Severino decided to go on cutting down trees, and that's what they were doing when Leonel came staggering up to them late in the morning. He was sweating and pale, still dizzy and miserable.

"Where were you?" Jose asked.

"I don't know," Leonel replied. "Something took me. 1 don't know where I was. Please, give me some tobacco."
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Pains Persist

They gave him tobacco but, when he smelled it, he fainted for a minute or so. He rested under a tree for the rest of the day as Jose and Severino continued working. About six in the evening, they took him home. Leonel had a dull pain in his right leg, a pain that he still felt the day I first interviewed him in January 1980.

"I was also partially deaf for about a month," he said. "I could hear nothing with my right ear and only a little with my left. I also had chest pains for about forty-five days. My wife found a small red puncture mark on the back of my right hip. I couldn't see it. She said it was like an injection mark. It went away after eight or ten days."

Leonel had a dream a few nights later. "I saw a strange little machine, smaller than a car, perhaps big enough to hold one person," he said. "It was going away from me. I could see some kind of fire in the back. I didn't see anyone but I heard a man's voice, very deep and ugly sounding, say: 'Don't you want to know what happened to you?"'

Leonel would like to know what happened, but those missing hours still remain a blank in his mind to this day. As we talked on that day in 1980, he seemed lethargic and melancholy. He spoke in a low voice. If there'd been any zest in him before, it wasn't there now.

Twelve years later, on a brief swing through Rio Grande do Norte in September 1991, Cynthia Luce and I stopped in Lajes to see how Leonel had fared since then. I was astonished to learn that he had never recovered from the incident and has lost nearly everything he owned.

"I have never been able to work again," he said in the living room of the small home that he and his wife, Aurea, now live in next to the town cemetery in Lajes. "I was a very strong worker before this happened. Now if I start working I

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begin trembling and have to stop and sit down. I am terribly weak and have a lot of pain in my bones, and my muscles are weak. I can't walk very far. My skin feels cold and clammy, and I have bad headaches."

Leonel said he could barely move for about a year after the incident. "Then I tried to work but couldn't because I was so full of pain," he said. "I worked on the farm but had to sit down often. Eventually I sold everything I had. I had some cattle, goats, sheep, horses and burros, and I sold everything I had. I had a nice piece of property. I needed money and couldn't work. I couldn't walk or ride my horse. I didn't sell everything all at once, just some here, some there, saving the horse to the last, thinking I could ride it, but I couldn't even do that. I had to sell my animals one by one to pay someone to work my land. Finally I had to sell the land itself.

Still Gets Dizzy

"I'm living now because the *prefeito* gave me a job as a night watchman at the cemetery.[1] But this is just an excuse to give me money so I can exist. I have to work from six to midnight, but I come home and collapse nearly every night. When I lay down, my head spins."

"I sold the farm two years ago and have been working at the cemetery for about two months. I own this home. The *prefeito* gave me this piece of land and I built this house.[2]

I saw Leonel once again in July 1993. By then he had given up his job at the cemetery to become custodian of a senior citizen center two blocks from his home. His physical condition remains the same, and he still has no idea what happened to him that day in 1979.

Many people have been hurt in UFO encounters, and some have died, but Leonel is one of only three that I know of who survived but were permanently disabled.

There is no direct evidence a UFO was involved in

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Leonel's case. It's possible that his dream of a little machine going away in the sky was a suppressed memory surfacing, but it may also have been just a dream.

However, the circumstantial evidence points toward a UFO as the villain. Rio Grande do Norte was under a virtual UFO siege at that time, and numerous sightings were reported in the Lajes area. A round shadow fell over Leonel as he stood in the dry river bed. He remembers somersaulting backwards into the air and then passing out when he looked up. He awoke four hours later some distance away, sick and nauseated and not knowing where he was. His friends found his tracks going into the river bed and ending abruptly where his *foice* was sticking in the sand. Something snatched him from the ground and took him away.

We don't know what happened to him during those four missing hours, except that he suffered a puncture wound in his back. Whether he was injected with some substance or something else happened to cause the wound, his life has been filled with misery ever since.

What could have caused the deafness and chest pains?[3] Why would one leg ache and not the other? What kind of injection would permanently affect his bones and muscles and cause severe headaches? If the aliens were conducting an experiment of some kind, they apparently weren't overly concerned with the effects it would have on Leonel.

Whatever it was, it left him in constant pain and unable to work for the rest of his life, one of the more tragic and senseless victims of UFO violence in Brazil.

Geraldo Gomes, who was levitated and carried a short distance in the Valley of the Old Women, also suffered from chest pains and had trouble with his eyesight.

1. Pray-FAY-too, the mayor of the *prefeitura*, or municipality.

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2. Forty by seventy feet.
3. Geraldo Gomes, who was levitated and carried a short distance in the Valley of the Old Women, also suffered from chest pains and had trouble with his eyesight.

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Chapter Fifteen

MISSING FOR A DAY

One other case of a man who was probably abducted by a UFO should be discussed. The victim in this one was Francisco Cavalcante Dos Santos, who was missing for an entire day and, like Leonel Dos Santos (no relation), has no idea where he was or what happened to him.

Francisco, twenty at the time, lived in a village of adobe homes scattered across barren hills that surround the Bom Fim mine twenty miles south of Lajes in Rio Grande do Norte. It can be reached only over a poor dirt road.

Francisco not only didn't know what happened to him, but he didn't want to talk about it, either. Nearly everything I learned about his experience came from his father and his friends.

"Before this happened, Francisco never drank much, only on weekends," Abrosio De Araujo, one of the friends, said. "Now he drinks every night after work."

Rogerio Freitas, who had first investigated the case, and I had arrived at Bom Fim late in the afternoon, after most of the men had finished working for the day. Francisco wasn't drinking, so far as we could see, and he wasn't talking much, either. He probably wouldn't have said anything to us at all if his father, Jose, hadn't insisted.

We talked to Jose and Abrosio and others outside Jose's

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small home while Francisco took a bath, and when Francisco was dressed, we moved inside. The living room was very small, but it seemed like a dozen or more fellow miners squeezed in there with us. It was getting dark, and Jose lit an oil lamp.

Francisco, a lean, young man of average height with black hair, didn't like the attention. He sat in a chair next to me, staring straight ahead and grunting only "Yes" or "No" or "I don't remember" to our questions. Most of his story came from Jose in the dim, eerie light of the oil lamp.

UFO Flies Over

"Francisco went to work at seven o'clock one Tuesday morning last September," Jose said. "He had a small snack of bread and cookies in his left pocket. He always comes home for lunch, but this day he didn't. When he didn't come home, I became worried and began looking for him, along with ten other men from the village. We looked everywhere but we never found him.

"Then, about eight o'clock that night, he came walking into the village and, at the same time, we saw a flying saucer rise up from behind the hill in the same direction Francisco was coming from. It was bright red and made no noise. It flew right over our house, within one hundred meters of us, and flew away.

"We asked Francisco where he'd been but he didn't remember. When he got to the door of the house, he simply fell forward onto the floor. He still had his food in his pocket."

Then Abrosio De Araujo said: "When Francisco got home his tongue was paralyzed. He had no feeling in it, and he couldn't speak clearly. This lasted for eight days, and during this time he couldn't eat anything. He only drank a little juice and water. Also, he didn't want anyone near him or to talk to him. He wanted to be left alone."

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It appeared that Francisco still wanted to be left alone. We had spent more than an hour and a half in the village, and it was now dark outside. We took pity on the young man and left.

The only connection with a UFO, of course, is that Francisco's father and most of the other villagers saw one pass overhead just a minute or so after Francisco walked into sight after being missing all day. It had come from behind a hill to the east, and Francisco had come walking from that direction.

Francisco could have blacked out on his way to work that morning, wandered into the countryside and found his way back in the evening. But that wouldn't explain his inability to speak clearly for eight days nor his intense desire to be left alone. Something happened to him that day that had a profound effect on him, whether he knew what had happened or not.

His father and friends felt certain the UFO had taken him away for the day, which seems to be a reasonable conclusion. Where he went and what happened during those thirteen hours is anybody's guess. Whatever it was, it brought about a personality change in Francisco.

The incident took place in 1979 and I talked to him in January 1980. Twelve years later, on a field trip through Rio Grande do Norte, Cynthia Luce and I managed to locate Francisco and talked to him.

He had long since quit working at the mine, which had closed down and later reopened when new minerals were discovered there. Now thirty-three, Francisco was working on a farm called Pedra Preta just north of the small city of Sao Tome. This is about twenty miles south of the Bom Fim mine but several mountain ranges lie in between.

A young couple and their children live at Sitio Pedra Preta. The husband said Francisco was working in a field, and

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he sent his son to fetch him. Twenty minutes later the boy returned with Francisco, who was as reluctant to talk as he was the first time I met him. He wasn't hostile, though, and didn't seem to resent being called in from the field to talk to us. However, his answers were still the brief yes-no variety. He never smiled.

Francisco said he never did find out what happened to him, and his memory of that day is still blank. He never had any aftereffects, had never dreamed about it and said he'd more or less stopped drinking. He looked healthy and said he was.

We soon ran out of questions to ask. He simply nodded and walked back to the field, possibly less concerned about what happened to him that day in September 1979 than we were.

Next, the injury toll rises as UFOs run amuck.

PART FOUR

A HARMFUL PHENOMENON

Chapter Sixteen

THE 'FIRE' IS COMING

In the small city of Pinheiro, a fisherman trudged slowly up the empty street. It was three o'clock in the morning, and he kept a wary eye on the dark buildings as he passed them. He'd been fishing for hours in the lake east of town and was carrying the fish he'd caught. Suddenly a ball of fire appeared without a sound in the sky, frightening him.

"O fogo!" he cried and ran, fearing for his life. It was a fiery-looking UFO and "the fire," as he called it in Portuguese,

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had been seen many times in recent weeks. Many people had been terrified. Some had been chased by it, and some had even been burned by its light. Almost everyone who saw it was afraid it would take them away.

As the fisherman ran for home, dogs began to bark. That awakened another man, who looked out a window and saw the glowing mass sitting motionless in the sky a thousand feet above the town. He hurried to his phone and nervously dialed the mayor, Manoel Paiva. In a faded yellow stucco house a few blocks away, Mayor Paiva stirred and sat up in bed as the phone jarred him awake.

"Quick, Mayor," the excited man told him, "look out the window -- 'the fire' is here!"

Paiva stepped over to a window. The first few times people had told him they'd seen a ball of fire moving through the sky, he was sure they were lying. But one night he saw it, too, and he realized they were telling the truth.

By now, as Paiva listened to the man on the phone, he had seen "the fire" several times, had marveled at it and was awed by it. As he looked out the window, he could see the bright UFO hovering just north of the plaza in the center of town, lighting up everything below it. It was an eerie, reddish color but gave off an unusual bluish light.

Vanishes Among the Stars

Paiva knew not to look at it too long. Too many people had complained that their eyes hurt after they'd stared at it. The object seemed to be a living thing, with colors swirling around in it like molten steel. Occasionally there was a flash of light, as if small explosions were occurring inside it.

Several minutes later, the object shot away with unbelievable speed, climbing so high into the sky that in seconds it became a mere pinpoint of light out in space.

A year and a half later when I first went to Pinheiro,

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Mayor Paiva said: "What impressed people most was that the UFO would go way up into the sky until it seemed like a star. In fact, we couldn't tell it from a star. And just as suddenly it would come right back down to earth again. It had incredible speed. If this is something from this world, then we have reached perfection, because this object made no sound, had great, great speed, could stop any place it wanted to, and could go in any direction.

"Many people were afraid to go out at night because of what might happen to them if 'the fire' caught them. Two-thirds of the people of this city saw what looked like a big ball of fire. Pinheiro has only sixteen thousand people, but it was seen in the whole area. I'd say it was seen by fifty thousand people.

"The object would come at high speed and stop. Suddenly, it would go up or down with the same velocity. Lots of people who were fishing in boats were chased by this ball of fire. It made many people sick. They had fevers and everything. Their eyes hurt. The light from the UFO was so bright it would seem like day. The intensity of the light left people a little dizzy. Everybody was afraid because we didn't know if the object had any radioactivity. I was afraid, too."

A number of fishermen and farmers reported they'd been burned when UFOs suddenly appeared without warning in the night sky just over their heads, Paiva said. The objects seemed to be attracted by anything that gave off light, a flashlight, a lantern, the flash of a match or even the glow of a cigarette.

"Some people were attacked by the UFO and chased by it, and some were burned by it," the mayor said. "The fishermen were so afraid that they wouldn't go fishing for three or four months. Many people wouldn't even go into their backyards to relieve themselves at night.

"There was no set time for the object to come. There

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were nights when it would appear at six o'clock and other nights at four in the morning. This object would come within three hundred to four hundred meters of the ground."

Mayor Paiva was so concerned with the object's almost nightly visits throughout April, May, June, and July in 1977 that he sent a telegram to the Regional Air Command Headquarters of the Brazilian Air Force asking for help. He never received an answer.

Workers Terrified

Paiva, a solidly built, middle-aged businessman, talked about the sightings for an hour, with Angela Hadade interpreting.

"One time there were twenty-six people working about six kilometers from the city, building fences," he said. "They asked one of the men to go fishing so they'd have something to eat. While he was fishing, the object suddenly appeared just above him. He ran back to camp, exhausted, and told everyone about a fireball chasing him.

"Then everybody in the camp saw it, too. It had a bluish light that lit up the area for about a kilometer around. It woke all the horses and cows, frightening them. The light stayed about half an hour and then suddenly disappeared.

"The next day, they moved their camp to another place because they were so afraid. At the new place, they dressed up a piece of wood like a scarecrow and put a kerosene lamp on top of it. They wanted to see if the strange object would come back, and they hid in the woods to watch.

"Later that night, the object suddenly just appeared, very, very close to the kerosene lamp. It stayed there for about forty-five minutes. The people said the light was so bright they couldn't tell its shape. After this, a lot of men left and went back home."

As we talked, Paiva sent an aide to find a fisherman

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named Inacio Rodrigues, believed to have been the first person in Pinheiro to report seeing the UFO. Rodrigues, a tall, slender man of fifty-two, arrived a few minutes later and told us this story:

"I was fishing with my friend Genesio Silva one night in April. About one-thirty in the morning, we saw a little 'fire' in the sky in the north. It was very small. I got a little worried and asked Genesio to put his cigar out. Then the 'fire' got bigger and bigger, and we could see it was spinning.

"We jumped out of the boat into the water and tried to find a place to hide. The 'fire' was getting bigger and bigger and closer and closer. We hid under a clump of bushes so the 'fire' wouldn't see us.

"The object stopped about a hundred meters away from us, and it stayed there until about five in the morning. We stayed hidden all that time because we were afraid to move. The light was bluish, but when it first appeared it was a small, red ball. It was beautiful, but it was so bright I couldn't look at it very much.

"Just before dawn it disappeared, just as if you'd turned off a light. And where the light had been we could see a kind of shadow, shaped like a refrigerator. When the sun came up, it disappeared. I got sick with dysentery and was sick the rest of the day."

Pinheiro, located in northern Maranhao, is where Benedito Bogea, the man who wants to be zapped again by a UFO, lives. His encounter is one of the many that took place during this period.

Man Burned

The day after we talked with Mayor Paiva, Angela, her sister, Cristina, and I drove to the village of Sao Bento, southeast of Pinheiro, to try to find a man who reportedly had been burned. We never located him, but we did come

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across another victim, Joao Barros, a fisherman in his forties who said he, too, had been burned by a UFO.

"I saw the 'light' in a river when I was fishing with two friends," said Joao. "We were in a boat, and at about one o'clock in the morning, the 'fire' appeared. It lit up a big area. The 'light' passed behind me going east. It was red in the center and greenish-blue on the outside.

"I felt a lot of heat from it, and for three days after I felt like pepper was burning my back. The other two men didn't have any burns. For one month after that, I wouldn't go fishing or go anywhere at night."

From Sao Bento, we drove on farther southeast to the small village of Mata De Olimpio, deep in the tropical forest. We'd been told that a man living there, Antonio Pinheiro, had also been burned by a UFO.[1]

After getting lost twice, we finally reached the village only to find that Pinheiro and his family had gone to another village for the day. We had to settle for talking to his neighbors. One of them, Ladislau Amorim, said: "Antonio told me he went into his backyard one night to go to the bathroom and, while he was out there, the object appeared with a very, very bright light over his head."

A dozen neighbors were crowded around us, some of them nodding from time to time, agreeing with what Ladislau was saying. "He ran back into the house screaming and, when he got to the kitchen door, he fell down. His wife pulled him inside. He was dizzy. He felt heat on the back of his arms and legs and back. His arms and legs were numb for eight days."

Another neighbor, Maria Pinheiro, who is no relation, said Antonio's wife had to put damp cloths on his back all night long.

Maria said her own husband, Lafonso, also had an encounter with a UFO. He made his living by buying food and

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other goods in the city of Pinheiro and other towns and carrying them back to his village on his horse to sell to his neighbors. Lafonso too was away that day, but this is what Maria told us:

"He was coming home from Pinheiro on his horse about five o'clock one morning when 'the fire' stopped over his head. He was very scared. He was using a flashlight to see where he was going, and when the object saw him, it came down and stopped above him. Lafonso jumped off his horse and started running. He didn't get burned, but he said he felt as if he had. He said the heat from the object was very strong. The 'light' stayed about two minutes and then disappeared. But my husband stayed at a friend's house the rest of the night."

Neither Lafonso nor Antonio would go outside at night anymore, she said.

At the time all these incidents happened, as many as fifty thousand people saw the UFOs, according to Mayor Paiva's estimate, yet few people outside the area knew what was happening. TV stations and newspapers in Sao Luis, located three hours to the east by car and ferryboat, had covered the sightings extensively, but the news apparently had never circulated much beyond Sao Luis.

Cameraman Films UFO

I had learned about these incidents from Monica Carneiro, who had been my chief interpreter while I was in Sao Luis investigating another case. She took me to see Cinaldo Oliveiro, a TV cameraman who had spent two weeks in the Pinheiro area in July 1977 with a reporter.

"About ninety percent of the people we talked to had seen the UFOs," Oliveiro said. "Many fishermen had actually been burned. One night we filmed this thing going through the sky in a wavy motion. It looked like a satellite but it varied so much in form and shape. It would grow bigger and

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suddenly disappear. The people there said it would reappear a little later near some person, and that is when they'd get burned.

"This thing we filmed actually made like a triangle in its flight through the sky. It would come from Crab Island in the Bay of Sao Marcos and go to Anajatuba and then to Sao Bento and Pinheiro. It looked like a star, but as the light grew bigger and bigger, it would change in color to yellow, blue and red. Then it turned off.

"The next day, about three kilometers from where we had been, we talked to a man with burns on his back. He told us that the night before, when the light turned off, it turned on again right above him, and that was when he got burned.

"I don't know how many fishermen were burned, but we interviewed about ten. They weren't very serious burns, but the men were so afraid that they didn't want to go out to work anymore.

"We talked to some people on a farm that has a building where all the workers live and sleep. This one man was fishing one night when the light suddenly turned on just above him. He ran as fast as he could into the building, and the light kept going around and around the building for twenty minutes."

While we were at the TV station, Jose Raimundo Rodrigues, thirty-one, a teacher in Pinheiro and a part-time reporter for the station, told us: "Some people in Jussaral, a village near Pinheiro, said they saw an object come down to the ground, and they saw two or three small figures come out from under it and get something off the ground. They said the light was as bright as the sun. After the thing disappeared, they found some marks on the ground."

Rodrigues said he had seen the object twice himself.

Joel Camara, then an engineering student in Sao Luis, and an uncle, Sanatiel Pereira, an engineer, went to Sao

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Bento at the height of the sightings because they wanted to see for themselves what was going on.

"We were just leaving Sao Bento when we met a man who was burned horribly," Camara told me. "The man told us that when he saw the UFO, he started running and, when he couldn't run any more, he fell down. We could see the burns all the way down his arms from where his sleeves ended. The skin was peeling off, and this had happened a week earlier."

Important Elements

The Pinheiro sightings were among the first I investigated in Brazil, and nearly everything I learned impressed me. Today, many of the happenings seem commonplace, but three things still stand out.

First is the fact that UFOs would suddenly appear without warning above a farmer or fisherman's head in a brilliant blaze of light that turned everything as bright as day, Sudden Daylight, as it were. The victims would always run, with the UFO hot on their heels, and although all apparently managed to escape, some were burned by the light from the UFOs.

Secondly, the UFOs would sometimes hover over Pinheiro and suddenly shoot so far out into the atmosphere that they would be lost among the stars, all in a matter of seconds. I have heard of this happening elsewhere, especially in the United States, and have a copy of a Pentagon document signed by a general stating that military personnel in Wyoming had seen this happen. What was even more impressive in Pinheiro is that sometimes after shooting out into space, the UFO would just as suddenly return to earth, again in seconds. Wouldn't the Pentagon love to have an aircraft with that capability?

Finally, it is amazing that so many people could see UFOs so often over such a long period without the outside world knowing about it. However, most of the cases I have

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looked into in Brazil have never been publicized or reported to anyone, and often no one except relatives and neighbors know about the incidents. Most of these cases are in rural areas, but they are not remote and most can easily be reached by car.

When sightings continue in an area for more than a few days at a time, it's called a flap. The four-month Pinheiro flap is one of the longest I know of, although not the longest. Sightings around Pinheiro dropped off sharply after July 1977 but never stopped completely. As in most parts of Brazil, sightings and encounters still take place from time to time.

Whether the aliens lost interest in Pinheiro or finished whatever business they had there, they seemed to vanish almost overnight. After four months of harassing the inhabitants almost every night, the UFOs seemed to have moved away. But where did they go? Too often, we never know because there is no investigator network to record sightings and keep track of when and where UFOs appear.

In this case, however, we do know where they probably went next. At about the same time they stopped showing up around Pinheiro, they began appearing over many small villages at the mouth of the Amazon, four hundred miles to the northwest. There they harassed people for sixteen months, terrorizing many, injuring at least forty and killing a woman and a man. These sightings occurred fairly close to a major city and were so threatening that military authorities conducted a lengthy investigation.

These incidents will be fully discussed later.

1. Pinheiro is a common name in the area.

Chapter Seventeen

THE INJURED

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In September 1976, an Iranian Imperial Air Force F4 was scrambled to intercept a UFO in the sky near Teheran.[1] When it got within fifteen to twenty miles of the UFO, the jet's crew locked their missiles on the target -- and got the shock of their lives. The UFO instantly sent a signal toward them so powerful that it knocked out not only the jet's weapons system but its radio, intercom and all navigational aids. The jet was defenseless.

This information came from a "Memo of Record" written by two U.S. military pilots, who attended a debriefing of the jet's crew, and was later confirmed by a general who was deputy commander of operations for the Iranian air force.[2] In Washington a short time later, an electronics warfare officer analyzed the American pilots' memo for the Defense Intelligence Agency.[3] He was impressed. In an official report to his superiors, he called the incident a "classic" case that met "all the criteria necessary for a valid study of the UFO phenomenon."

In a telephone interview one year later, the analyst told me the encounter was "rather frightening...I'd love to go into combat with the capability of turning off my opponent's weapon-system panel at will and to cut off his communications."

That is an awesome capability, and it was effective at a distance of fifteen to twenty miles. Something similar happened in Brazil, although on a smaller scale. A UFO emitted a strong beam of light from atop a mountain that chilled eight people in a farmhouse two and a half miles away and left them sick. At the same time, it lit up the entire valley as far as the people could see to the left and the right as if it were daytime. That, too, is awesome.

Girls Attacked

One of those who saw the light was Francisco Marciano De Abreu, who was sitting on the veranda of his farmhouse

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with his wife and six neighbors at the time.

"I was nauseated and had a headache for two weeks because of the light," he said. "I had trouble with my eyes for two months. They kept running and itching. All of us had the same trouble afterwards."

This happened at Marciano's farm four miles south of Lajes in Rio Grande do Norte. He said everyone on the veranda felt very cold when the light was focused on them.

Among the others in the group were Raimunda Da Silva, then thirteen, and a friend of hers, Lidia, fifteen. A short time before the light hit the people on the veranda, the UFO had terrorized the two girls as they were walking to Marciano's house from Raimunda's home. The girls had seen the UFO in the distance but thought it was a car light.

However, the UFO suddenly swooped down from the mountain and stopped a few feet above the ground very close to the girls, who were thirty to forty yards from Marciano's house. The girls panicked and began screaming. The UFO, looking like a huge ball of yellowish light, was so bright that Raimunda's mother, watching from her own home a hundred yards away, could see pebbles on the ground. She yelled at the girls to run, but Raimunda collapsed and nearly fainted. Lidia fell to the ground with her, and they clutched each other in fear.

Less than a minute later, the UFO shot back to the mountaintop and from there shined a light toward Marciano's house. By now the light had turned bluish in color.

Meanwhile, Marciano's wife, Maria, and another woman had run down the path and helped the girls to the veranda. With the light still shining on everyone from the mountaintop, Marciano and his neighbors tried to calm the girls down. After a few minutes the light simply vanished, but the coldness lasted about an hour.

That happened in August 1979, and I talked to

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Raimunda, her parents, and Marciano four months later. I went back in September 1992 to see whether Raimunda or Lidia had suffered any aftereffects, but both had moved away, Raimunda to Rio de Janeiro and Lidia to Natal.

Busted Romance

Marciano said everyone on the veranda suffered from headaches and eye problems for up to two months. People can get hurt by UFOs in other ways, and in more ways than one, in an encounter. A young man named Sinval Santos, for example, not only got badly cut up in a run-in with a UFO but lost his girlfriend as well.

Late one night in June 1990, Sinval rode his bicycle high into the hills near Baldim in the Valley of the Old Women in Minas Gerais to visit his sweetheart. The visit ended around eleven o'clock, when he said goodnight and began pedaling back toward his own home down in the valley.

"Just as I got down to the main highway, my bicycle threw off its chain," Sinval, twenty-five, said in an interview in September 1991. "I got off and was trying to fix it when, all of a sudden, there was a bright light above me.

"I threw my bicycle down and ran toward the woods. The light followed me, and there was a barbed wire fence I didn't see. I hit it and was knocked over backwards. I got puncture wounds in my hand, my thigh and three or four places in my body, and it ripped my clothes.

"I got up, jumped over the fence, ran into the woods and hid. The light passed over me about eight meters high and went a little beyond. Then it stopped. I couldn't see it, but everything was still lit up around me. It made a sound like air escaping from a balloon."

Sinval didn't dare move or make a sound. Then an airplane came flying toward him and the UFO. A minute or so later, when the plane got close, the UFO turned all of its

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lights off. Except for the drone of the small plane, the night became eerily quiet and totally dark.

"I stayed very still," Sinval said. "After the plane passed over, I looked around and saw the object far away. I carefully and quietly got my bicycle and went home like a bat out of hell."

The incident so frightened Sinval that he stopped seeing his sweetheart. "I don't go up there anymore," he said. "She wanted to know why, and I told her: 'You live too far away, and it's too dangerous.'"

Sinval said that when the UFO passed overhead, it looked like a squashed sphere with a big, bright, yellow headlight in the middle and purple, green and dull, yellow lights revolving around it.

Something so mysterious and unknown can be frightening, and it's easy to understand why people panic and run blindly in the dark to get away. It's a wonder more people don't get hurt. Besides unseen barbed wire fences, there are holes, trees and bushes that people can run into.

One bush is particularly threatening. It has slender, green, pencil-thin branches that break easily and ooze a milky substance that can damage the eyes and even blind a person. In desperation, some people have hidden in these bushes, less afraid of going blind than of being caught by a UFO.

In all of the cases I know about, most of the injuries were inflicted by the UFOs rather than by collisions with such things as trees, bushes and fences.

Mechanic Zapped

A very different kind of incident occurred in Belo Horizonte and involved a mechanic at a Volkswagen dealership.[4]

The mechanic was ending his work day when he

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spotted a door open on a car in the lot. He went out and, just as he closed the door, he noticed two balls of yellow light circling above the lot. He stood watching them for a moment, and suddenly one shot a ray of light down at him, hitting him on his right side. He got a severe headache almost immediately. At the same time, the yellow lights disappeared.

As it was quitting time, the mechanic went into the building to shower and change clothes. When he took his shirt off, he saw a small hole on the right side of it. It smelled as if it had been burned. He stepped into the shower, turned the water on and, as he touched his face, it felt oddly rough. He went to a mirror and discovered he had small burns on his right cheek. Examining himself more closely, he found more burns on the right side of his chest and on his right arm, as well as bruises and small dots, all of which were later photographed by investigator Hulvio Aleixo.

Teacher Burned

Most people injured in encounters eventually recover, although some have bad dreams and emotional scars. Others never fully regain their health and are affected for years or even the rest of their lives. Two brief examples:

Shortly after eight o'clock one morning in October 1974, a teacher was taking a bath in a lake in northern Ceara when she heard a noise.[5] Looking up, she saw a UFO rise from the ground, move sideways and then come down the middle of the lake toward her. As it did, it shined a bright, blue light at her. She felt tremendous heat. Then the UFO flew away, zig-zagging toward the southwest.

After the encounter, she was dizzy and nauseated, felt sharp pains and prickly sensations, and had slight burns on her back and arms and spots on her legs. Later, blisters formed on the burned areas, and she had nightmares about the incident.

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In the next six to eight months, she lost thirty-five pounds and stopped teaching. Her health has been poor ever since.

Loses Voice

The other case occurred in Minas Gerais in central Brazil. The same day that we talked to Sinval Santos in the Valley of the Old Women, Hulvio Aleixo took me to the home of a woman in Baldim named Isauru Dos Reis.[6] The case involved her father, Geraldo Da Costa, who lost his voice in an encounter and underwent a marked change in personality. He blamed it all on a UFO.

Geraldo is now dead, and his story came from Isauru. One night in May 1977, she said, he was riding home on his horse when an oval-shaped object passed over him less than ten feet above the ground. It had many colored lights and gave off a lot of heat.

He continued riding and, about fifty yards beyond, he came upon the UFO on the ground. Two little men were standing near it. They had large eyes and long hair. One asked him to help them, and then one reached up and touched his shoulder. Suddenly, Geraldo found himself floating down to the ground, with the frightened horse running off. Geraldo remembered yelling for help, but apparently he blacked out and was never sure what happened after that. He thought he was taken inside the UFO.

The next day people found him lying in a nearby bamboo grove and believed he was dead, but he was only unconscious. He had a red, six-inch scar on the inside of one arm and five tiny puncture wounds, two on each side of his chest and waist and one on his left shoulder. The holes had silver edging around them which gradually disappeared as the injuries healed.

Geraldo was taken home, and he stayed in bed for

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three days in a daze. He couldn't speak, even when he was well enough to get up, and he went to three hospitals in Belo Horizonte trying to find out what was wrong. Some doctors thought he might have had cancer, but tests showed nothing. Later he went to another hospital closer to home, and a small tumor was found growing on his vocal cords. A surgeon removed two small fragments.

Until the encounter, Geraldo had always been a vigorous, hard-working, bossy man who spoke in a clear, strong voice. Afterwards he was quiet and docile and could barely speak. Only Isauru could understand what he said, and then she had to put her ear to his mouth.

"The problem began the day of the encounter, and my father said it was caused by the UFO," Isauru said. "After this happened, he told me he kept hearing a noise like a motor in his head. Until the day my father died, every time there was a knock on the door, he thought it was the little men again."

The encounter also severely affected the horse, leaving it too weak to carry anyone anymore. Despite her father's request, Isauru said, her husband put a saddle on the horse one day and tried to ride it but broke its ribs. It was sold for horse meat.

Geraldo died in 1985 at the age of seventy-two. Although the encounter robbed him of his voice and turned him from a domineering man into a mild-mannered one, he still lived pretty much as he wanted to. Isauru said he insisted on going out almost every night to a party or dance, and one of his children would trail along to help him if he fell down.

Despite the changes in his life, Geraldo enjoyed the last seven years of his life even though he couldn't speak loud enough for most people to understand. Two other people injured by UFOs weren't as lucky. One was left totally helpless the rest of his life, and the other is now a cripple,

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confined to a wheelchair. We meet them next.

1. This was two years before the Islamic revolution, a time when the United States maintained friendly diplomatic relations with Iran and U.S. military advisers were stationed in the country.
2. Since 1969, when the U.S. Air Force ended its official investigations of UFOs, it has steadfastly denied having any further interest in them. At the time of the 1976 Teheran incident, the Iranian officer, Lieutenant General Abdulah Azarbarzin, said the information the Iranians gathered in their investigation had been passed on to the U.S. Air Force. "That was the request from the U.S.," he said in a telephone interview. "They have this procedure, if we have some information on UFOs we're just exchanging all this information, and we did it." The top American military officer in Tehran at the time was General Robert Secord, who later became one of the prominent figures in the Iran-Contra investigation.
3. The memo was leaked to a now-defunct civilian UFO organization by a still unidentified DIA.
4. Information provided by Belo Horizonte investigator Hulvio Aleixo.
5. Case investigated by Reginaldo Athayde of Fortaleza.
6. EES-ah-OO-roo Dose Hice.

Chapter Eighteen

PERMANENTLY ZAPPED

For seventeen years an old man lay in a small room at the back of a large house in Ceara, helpless and needing a full-time nurse. In a small, humble, mud-walled house one-

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hundred-thirty miles to the north, a younger man sits all day long in a wheelchair, unable to walk or speak clearly. Both were victims of UFOs.

The older man, Luis Fernandes Barroso, had been a businessman and rancher in Quixada, a city in the central part of the state.[1] From late 1976 until he died in April 1993, Luis had been in a vegetative state, totally dependent, able to say only three words and recognizing no one but his wife, Teresina.

His sad story began several hours before dawn on April 23, 1976, when he hitched a donkey to a two-wheel carriage and set out from the family home in the city to go to his farm ten miles east of town. He never made it, at least not on his own.

Around seven o'clock that morning, a cowboy named Joao Francisco found him sitting in the carriage on the side of a highway three miles from the farm. Both Luis, then fifty-three, and the donkey were in a daze. Joao took them to Luis' farm. Later in the day, when Luis became coherent, he told his wife, Teresina, what had happened.

Two hours before daybreak, he said, a big, lighted object came down from the sky and hovered over him and the donkey. A door opened on the bottom, and a beam of hot light hit him and the donkey. He passed out and doesn't know what happened after that.

Before the day ended, Luis was very sick, vomiting and suffering from nausea, diarrhea and headaches. Teresina took him to Dr. Antonio Moreira Megalhes in Quixada. The doctor, then forty, had known Luis most of his life and listened sympathetically to his story about the UFO. He then gave him some medicine.

Hair Turns White

Luis didn't get any better, though, and Dr. Megalhes

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suggested he see a psychiatrist. Teresina took Luis to Fortaleza, one hundred miles to the north, and over the next two months he was examined by a total of twelve psychiatrists and psychologists. None could say what was wrong with him although some thought he might have a lesion on his brain.

Not one of the doctors put any credence in Luis' story about the UFO, and because of this he stopped talking about it long before the end of his stay in Fortaleza. The only people who believed him were Teresina and Dr. Megalhes, and Dr. Megalhes was ridiculed by fellow physicians because he did.

By the time Luis returned to Quixada, his speech was beginning to deteriorate. Three months after the UFO incident occurred, his hair turned white almost overnight. By the end of six months, he had lost all his mental faculties and had regressed to the age of a one-year-old child.

From that moment on, the only words he ever uttered were *mamae*, *medo* and *da*. In English, they mean "mama," "danger" and "give." He didn't react to any stimuli, with one exception. When anyone took a photograph of him with a strobe light, as I did once without realizing what would happen, he would scream when he saw the flash.

Reginaldo Athayde was the first investigator to study this case. In 1986, we went to Quixada together and talked to Dr. Megalhes and Teresina Barroso, both of whom told me the story of what had happened to Luis.

Dr. Megalhes even went with us to the Barroso home, where Luis was being watched over by a nurse. Luis sat in an easy chair, staring straight ahead and moving his eyes from time to time but apparently seeing nothing. All his days for seventeen years were like that, with Luis either sitting in the chair or lying in a bed. One by one Dr. Megalhes raised Luis' arms and legs, and Luis would slowly lower them by himself.

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This, Dr. Megalhes said, showed that Luis still had full control of his arms and legs and hadn't suffered a stroke.

Luis may have suffered some undetected mental condition at the same time the UFO hit him with a beam of light, and the whole affair could have been just a strange coincidence. However, the donkey that was pulling his carriage that morning was also affected by the light. Teresina said the animal seemed to be in a stupor for about a week after the incident and wouldn't eat for several weeks, but then recovered without any further effects. Forever after, though, it was skittish and easily frightened.

Luis died on April 1, 1993, of pneumonia. Fortunately for him, Teresina was able to carry on the family businesses and could afford full-time nurses to take care of him for the seventeen years he lived after the UFO left him a helpless invalid.

Another Zapped

The other victim crippled by a UFO, Jose Vonilson Dos Santos, has not been as lucky. Vonilson has been an invalid ever since the day he, too, was hit by a beam of light from a UFO.

It happened shortly after dark one evening in May 1979 as he climbed over a wooden fence while walking across a farm on his way to a religious meeting.[2] He was twenty-two at the time, worked as a farm laborer and lived with his widowed mother on a farm near Carnaubinha, west of Fortaleza.

"When I was almost over the fence, I was hit by a beam of yellow and green light," Vonilson said. "The UFO was about ten meters above me. The beam hit me on the right side of my neck. I was halfway over the fence and was putting one foot on the ground at the time, and I tried to hide in the bushes. But I fell down. I got up and fell down again. I couldn't move. I was paralyzed."

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It was when he first fell to the ground that he looked up and saw the round, silent object above him.

"It was about two meters across, and it had a small hole on the bottom," he said. "I saw some lights on it, but I don't know how many there were. After about five seconds, it went toward the ocean and disappeared."

Helpless for Three Days

The Atlantic coast is five miles north of the spot where Vonilson fell to the ground. As he watched the UFO disappear, he discovered he couldn't move either leg and had only slight control over his arms. He lay where he fell and, incredibly, stayed in the same spot for nearly three days and nights, helpless. He was in a field, and the nearest house was a mile away.

In the beginning, the ground was still wet from rain that had fallen the day before. He was bothered at times by mosquitoes but escaped getting sunburned because he was in the shade of a tree. Unable to control himself, he also wet his pants.

"I was scared but I didn't feel any pain," he said. "I was very thirsty and hungry. I was awake most of the time. There were so many stars, so much wind."

No one realized he was missing. This occurred on a Sunday evening, and his mother had gone to Fortaleza and didn't return home until the following Wednesday. The people at the farm where he worked assumed he, too, had gone away for a few days.

Vonilson was discovered on Wednesday by twelve-year-old Luis Perreira, a farm boy who happened to be walking by. Luis ran and got his father, Joaquim, who took Vonilson home. Vonilson's mother, Regina, wasn't there so they took him to another farm where he was given some herbal tea and brandy. When Vonilson's mother returned,

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she took him home and also gave him tea and brandy.

He didn't get any better and, some weeks later, she took him to a doctor who examined him and said he had suffered a stroke. Regina, who has ten other children living elsewhere, told us Vonilson had been healthy, spoke normally and had no disabilities before the UFO incident.

Vonilson, who never went to school but learned to read, now has no way to support himself. He and his mother are very poor and live on a small pension she receives in a simple house on the outskirts of Caucaia.

In one way, Vonilson is like Benedito Bogea, the farmer who wants to be zapped again. "I think the UFO did something to me," Vonilson said. "Now I want someone from the UFO to come back and fix me."

What happened to Luis and Vonilson is tragic. Luis lived seventeen more years and never recovered, while Vonilson is still alive and probably will be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

Other victims of close encounters, though, haven't been even that fortunate.

1. Kee-sha-DAH.
2. This case was first investigated by veteran Fortaleza researcher Jose Jean Alencar.

PART FIVE

A DEADLY PHENOMENON

Chapter Nineteen

DEATH ON CRAB ISLAND

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Jose Sousa was twenty-two the day he died. He was healthy and had no known ailments. What killed him is a mystery.

The day started out sunny and hot as he and three other men sailed an old, weather-beaten boat from Sao Luis to Crab Island fifteen miles to the south in Sao Marcos Bay. They arrived early in the afternoon, anchored in a stream well inside the island and spent the rest of the afternoon cutting down trees and shaping them into poles. They planned to sell the poles for use in constructing simple buildings.

The island is twenty-five miles long and seven wide. It's a desolate, swampy, uninhabited place infested with mosquitoes and covered with scrub brush and trees. People go there only to get wood or catch crabs.

With Jose were two of his brothers, Apolinario, thirty-one, and Firmino, thirty-eight, and a cousin, Auleriano Bispo Alves, thirty-six. They worked all afternoon cutting and stacking poles on the bank. They quit at six o'clock as the sun was setting and ate a supper of beef and rice. The tide was out, and the boat was sitting in the mud of the empty stream.

They chatted until eight o'clock, then went to sleep inside the boat, covering the hatch with a piece of canvas to keep mosquitoes out. A small louvered window at the back of the cabin allowed a little air to circulate. A lantern with the wick turned low hung on one side of the cabin.

The men planned to wake up around midnight when the tide came in, load the poles onto the boat and sail back to Sao Luis on the outgoing tide. Jose, Apolinario and Auleriano had made this trip at least a hundred times before and had never failed to wake up when the tide came in. The rocking motion of the boat as the stream filled plus the sound of the rushing water hitting the hull was as good as any alarm

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clock.

Firmino was the only novice. The regular fourth man in the crew was sick and Firmino, a farmer, asked to take his place because he needed poles for an addition to his house in the tropical forest. It was his first trip, and he was to regret it.

Something went terribly wrong after they went to sleep. By midnight, Jose was dead and Firmino and Auleriano were badly injured, but no one would know what happened or why. No one knew then. No one knows now.

Shocking Discovery

Instead of waking up at midnight, no one awoke until five the next morning as the sun was rising. Apolinario, who had slept on a mat on the cabin floor, heard Auleriano calling for help in the front of the boat. Apolinario was puzzled, because Auleriano had gone to sleep in a hammock at the back of the boat, four feet behind Apolinario's mat.

Apolinario scrambled forward, ducked under another hammock where Jose had gone to sleep, and threw back the canvas covering the hatchway. With the cargo area suddenly visible in the early light of dawn, Apolinario saw Auleriano lying in several inches of water in the bilge. He asked what was wrong, but Auleriano didn't know. He was in pain, couldn't stand up and didn't know how he got there.

Apolinario helped Auleriano climb through the hatch onto the deck and discovered he was burned on both shoulder blades. Auleriano then pulled his shorts down and discovered he also had a burn on his left buttock. Strangely, his shorts were not burned.

Apolinario began fixing tea for Auleriano, and then he heard someone moaning back in the boat. He went down into the cabin, again ducked under Jose's hammock, and found Firmino lying on the floor under Auleriano's hammock. This

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was another surprise, because Firmino had gone to sleep in the front of the boat, where he'd found Auleriano. But Apolinario's surprise turned to shock as he examined Firmino.

"Firmino was all burned and swollen and the skin had come off," Apolinario said later. "I tried to talk to him, but he didn't answer. His eyes were closed, and I tried to open them but couldn't. I got really scared."

Desperate, Apolinario turned to Jose's hammock to get him to help, but as soon as he touched him, he realized Jose was dead. Apolinario was horrified by the latest discovery and checked Jose's pulse. But there was no beat. Jose's body was cold and stiffening with rigor mortis. One leg hung over the side of the hammock. Grief-stricken, Apolinario felt he had to put the leg back in the hammock, but it was a struggle.

He was overwhelmed and wanted to cry, but he was the only healthy man on board, and he'd have to get everyone back to Sao Luis by himself. There was no medicine or first-aid kit aboard, and he couldn't do anything for the burned men. Worse, the tide was now out and the boat was sitting in the mud again.

God Helped Me

He had to wait more than eight hours for the tide to come in again. About two o'clock in the afternoon, he began sailing back to Sao Luis. It was a difficult journey because normally it takes at least three men to handle the sail and rudder of the forty-foot boat, and Apolinario had no help. Jose was dead, Firmino was unconscious and Auleriano was in too much pain. All the way back, Firmino rolled from one side of the cabin floor to the other as the boat rode the heaving waves in the bay.

"God helped me," Apolinario, a small, thin man just over five feet tall, said simply. "We would all have died without God's help."

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The sun was setting when they arrived at the Port of Itaqui near Sao Luis, but Apolinario's nightmare was far from over. The only people at the small, deep-water port were two security guards, and they weren't able to help him. He had to walk six miles into Sao Luis, tell the police what had happened and then walk home to get his oldest brother, Pedrinho. The two returned to the port in a car at nine o'clock and took Firmino to a hospital. Although Auleriano was suffering from his own burns, he stayed with Jose's body.

The police didn't get to the boat until one A.M. They took Jose's body to the Medical Legal Institute, and only then was Auleriano able to go to a hospital for treatment.[1] His burns were to leave scars, but he was able to go home that night.

'Emotional Shock'

Firmino was in a coma for a week, and he stayed in the hospital for more than a month. Second-degree burns covered much of his body. The most serious were on the left side of his rib cage, the inside of his left arm and on his forehead. The arm muscles were so badly damaged that the fingers on his left hand were left permanently curled and virtually useless.

No autopsy was performed on Jose. Sao Luis is near the equator and, after more than twenty-four hours in the heat, his body was badly decomposed. The doctor who examined him for the Medical Legal Institute said in his report that there were no cuts or bruises on the body. The death certificate stated that Jose had suffered a "cerebral vascular accident caused by arterial hypertension as a consequence of an emotional shock." The cause of death was listed as "emotional shock."

There was no explanation of what that "emotional shock" was. I spent one month in the Sao Luis area

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investigating this and other cases and, for much of that time, tried to find the doctor. With Monica Carneiro and other interpreters, I tracked him from place to place, leaving messages everywhere, but when we finally found him, he refused to talk to me and wouldn't say why. However, I discovered that when he submitted his report on Jose's death, his boss strongly criticized him for his conclusions.

The police couldn't determine what happened on Crab Island. Investigators went to the island, examined the area where the boat had been anchored, inspected the boat itself, and talked to the survivors and people who knew them. There was no evidence that the men had been drinking or taking drugs, suffered from food poisoning or toxic fumes or had been fighting. The police found no sign of a fire on the boat or on the island. The only conclusion they did reach was that the three survivors truthfully did not know what happened.

None of the three men can recall the smallest detail of that night, not even under deep hypnosis. A burn has to be one of the most excruciatingly painful injuries anyone can suffer, yet two men were severely burned before midnight and neither knew anything about it, one not until the next morning and the other not until he came out of a coma a week later.[2]

How could these things happen and the men not have any memory of how they got burned? What or who could inflict such injuries and then completely blot the painful experience out of the minds of the victims? How could a healthy, young man like Jose simply die in his sleep without any apparent cause?

Media Attention

These are a few of the questions that puzzled Maranhao police, and they have never found the answers.

There is no direct evidence that a UFO was involved in

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the incident. The men saw nothing unusual. It occurred on the night of April 25, 1977, during a period of numerous UFO sightings throughout the area. The newspapers and radio and TV stations in Sao Luis immediately jumped on the story, and most blamed a UFO for what happened because of the mystery surrounding the case and because so many UFOs had been seen.

Despite the media attention, the Crab Island incident was not publicized outside of Sao Luis. I learned of it only because Roberto Granchi, son of veteran Rio de Janeiro UFO investigator Irene Granchi, went to Sao Luis in early 1978 to repair some electronic equipment on a boat at the Port of Itaqui. While there, Roberto heard about the case and managed to talk to Auleriano. He told Irene what he'd learned, and I heard it from her. In late November 1978, I went to Sao Luis.

It is an old, colonial city on an island at the mouth of a huge bay, with narrow, hilly streets and buildings in pastel shades of green, pink, blue, yellow and other colors, many covered with ornamental tiles. It has miles of beautiful beaches. At that time it had a quarter of a million people, but the city grew rapidly in the 1980s and, by the mid-1990s, was approaching a population of one million.

One of the first persons I talked to about the Crab Island case was Clesio Muniz, chief of criminal investigation for the Maranhao police.

"I saw these people with those strange burns, and I do not believe they were burned by ordinary fire," Muniz said. "I don't believe in UFOs, but this is a strange phenomenon that I have no explanation for. I had heard reports of the 'fire ball' having been seen in cities around Crab Island and west of here. A lot of people had seen the 'fire ball' when this happened, both before and after.

"From reports I received, the 'fire balls' do not seem

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like falling stars. They go up or down or to the left or right, horizontally or vertically, slowly, fast, or very slow and then very, very fast. It is an unusual phenomenon, and I do not know what it is."

Another investigator told me he believed lightning caused the death and burns. His theory was that lightning struck the sand or mud near the boat, bounced back up and then flew horizontally into the cabin, striking three of the four sleeping men.

He Saw a 'Fire'

Two doctors from the Medical Legal Institute who examined Firmino in the hospital also thought lightning was the cause. One was Dr. Carneiro Belfort, then director of the Institute and later a professor of medicine at one of the universities in Sao Luis.

"I wanted to see Firmino because the newspapers were saying UFOs caused it, and I wanted to see for myself," Dr. Belfort said. "I've never seen a UFO, and I don't believe they exist. The burns were characteristic of lightning, but I cannot definitely say it was lightning. If it wasn't lightning, I don't know what it could have been. The man told me he had seen a 'fire' before passing out."

That last remark — that Firmino in his delirium had mumbled something about "the fire" — was the only discernible link to a UFO. O fogo or "the fire" is a common term for a UFO throughout Brazil.

The other doctor favoring the lightning theory was Jose Oliveira, then a member of the staff of the Legal Medical Institute.

"Firmino had many second-degree burns and could have died," he said. "In my opinion, it was lightning. But if lightning was the cause, then the boat should have had some damage or burns and the one who died should have been

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burned."

Neither doctor saw the boat or Jose's body, but the death certificate stated there were no marks or lesions on the body.

As we talked, Dr. Oliveira examined the institute's records on the injured men. Regarding the burn on Auleriano's buttock, he said: "It is likely that if he had been struck by lightning his clothing would have been burned as well." Both Auleriano and Apolinario said Auleriano's shorts were not burned.

Clesio Muniz, the chief criminal investigator, strongly disagreed with the lightning theory, as did Sergeant Atenor Costa, an Air Force meteorologist at the Sao Luis airport. The airport, fifteen miles northeast of the island, is served by four national airlines, two regional airlines and several air taxi companies. The meteorology station's records show no lightning or violent weather between five P.M. April 25 and six A.M. April 26. There was a light rain at eleven P.M. and again at midnight, but otherwise the night was clear and quiet.

"There is no way lightning could come down, hit the sand and bounce back up and then go sideways into the boat," Sergeant Costa said. "It just doesn't do that. If it had, it should have burned the canvas curtain. Lightning wouldn't hit two or three men at the same time because their positions in the boat were so different. The lightning would have to be like a winding road to do that.

"Furthermore, it is highly unlikely it could kill the one man without burning him. It just is not possible for lightning to burn two men and kill the other without leaving a mark on him."

Natalino Filho, director of the weather station, said lightning could have hit the water and passed through it to the boat, since water is a good conductor of electricity. "If

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that had happened, however, Apolinario should have been killed because he was lying on the floor nearest the water," Filho said.

The Swamp From Hell

There definitely weren't any burns on the boat. I personally inspected it myself, and it was a hellish experience. Firmino was then living in the forest some distance south of Itauna, the western ferryboat terminal across Sao Marcos Bay from Sao Luis. With Ana Teresa Britto and her sister, Leila, as interpreters, I went to find Firmino and take him back to Sao Luis. When we reached his home, we learned that the *Maria Rosa*, the boat used by the four men for their trip to Crab Island, was anchored in a nearby stream. I had been searching for it for days but far away in the Sao Luis area.

We had to wait for Firmino to get ready to go to Sao Luis with us, so Ana Teresa, Leila and I set out to inspect the boat, with Firmino's wife, Maria, showing us the way. We drove to a small village, parked and started walking down a path into the forest. Five minutes later we came to a swamp where the path disappeared under the water for about seventy-five yards. Maria said there was no other way to get to the boat.

Thoughts of piranhas and other vicious creatures gave me a headache as I studied the dark water. I couldn't see a thing under the murky surface, and we had to go through it barefoot or lose our shoes in the muck. I wanted to cry.

Maria assured me it was only knee deep, but I didn't want to go through it barefoot or otherwise no matter how shallow it was. However, I had no choice if I wanted to examine the boat. All three women laughed at me as I stalled. Then, hating every second of it, I plunged in and sloshed across, with Maria in front and Ana Teresa and Leila behind me. But nothing happened, and we got to the other

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side with all our toes intact.

A few minutes later we reached the boat. The tide was out, and it was sitting in the mud. It was made entirely of wood and had a single huge sail. It was old, and its paint was so faded that I could just barely make out the name, *Maria Rosa*.

There was no one around. As the three women sat on a log and waited, I walked up a plank onto the deck. The only entrance to the cabin and cargo hold below the deck is through a square hatch just behind the mast. I spent about thirty minutes looking the boat over thoroughly inside and out. There was no sign of any fire or violence anywhere. I took a number of photos, and then the four of us went back — through that same swamp again.[3]

We took Firmino to Sao Luis because I had arranged for Dr. Silvio Lago to come to Sao Luis from Niteroi, near Rio de Janeiro, to hypnotize the three men. Dr. Lago was a physician and professor of medicine who, at that time, had used hypnosis in his practice for forty-five years. The three men agreed to the sessions because they had been depressed ever since the incident and hoped he could help them.

Mental Block

Dr. Lago spent a total of sixteen hours with the men, six hours talking to them individually and together about their lives and what happened at Crab Island and the other ten hours in individual hypnosis sessions. When he was through, he was convinced the men were telling the truth, but he hadn't gained any clues about what happened that night.

"They were unable to remember anything that happened to them after they went to sleep that night," Dr. Lago said later. "I am not accustomed to seeing this kind of mental block. This is a very strange and complicated case."
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Emotion alone would not be enough to cause the mental block, he said. "It was something physical and psychic but not common. A very strong emotion could cause amnesia, but it doesn't seem likely that it was their emotional reaction that caused the mental block. It is possible that before or during the experience they had some kind of hypnosis, a very deep one, preparing them not to remember whatever it was after they experienced it."

Another thing that puzzled him was that Apolinario, who had no apparent injuries, had the same kind of mental block as the other two.

"One hypothesis is that Apolinario would have to have had a very strong emotion that would cause the block," Dr. Lago said. "I can't imagine what that would be unless he had seen whatever happened. Whatever imposed this mental block was much stronger than his grief at seeing his brother dead, because he remembers everything before and after but nothing in between, and I cannot believe there is any greater emotion than seeing a brother dead and two men injured. It is very strange."

Still another part of the mystery is the fact that Auleriano went to sleep at the very back of the boat and awoke in the front, while Firmino, who had gone to sleep in the front, was found at the back near Auleriano's hammock. Neither man had any recollection of changing position during the night.

Some people familiar with the case believe a UFO plucked the men out of the boat, did whatever it did to them, and then put them back but mistakenly placed Firmino in Auleriano's location and Auleriano where Firmino had been.

Whatever happened that night aboard the *Maria Rosa* occurred between the time they went to sleep at eight P.M. and midnight, when they intended to awaken. Three of the men were accustomed to waking up when the tide came in,

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but no one awoke until the next morning. This suggests that all four were unconscious before midnight.

Whatever or whoever burned Firmino and Auleriano most likely was also responsible for causing Jose's death. Just exactly when these events occurred can't be determined, but probably before midnight. Jose's body was getting stiff, and Apolinario had difficulty putting his leg back in the hammock between five and five-thirty A.M. Normally, rigor mortis begins setting in three to four hours after death and takes about twelve hours for complete stiffening of the body.

Now in Poor Health

When I interviewed the three survivors, I was hoping that the mental blocks that suppressed their memories of that night would eventually weaken and they'd remember. But that may never happen. I went back in 1981 and talked to Auleriano and Apolinario, and again in 1992, when I talked to all three. None of them has ever remembered anything.

Interestingly, the two who were burned, Firmino and Auleriano, are now in robust health but Apolinario, who suffered no apparent injuries that night, is in poor health. A year and a half after the incident, he began to feel a weakness in his left arm. By 1981, the year he turned thirty-six, he could no longer hold anything in his left hand without dropping it. By 1992, at the age of forty-six, he had little strength in his left arm and hand, suffered from severe headaches, and walked with an odd, stiff-legged gait. He doesn't know why. He's never had any crippling accidents or illnesses. When he can work, he makes charcoal.

Firmino, who lost weight and did little for several years after the incident — and even acted a little silly at times, according to his wife, Maria -- is husky and mentally sharp once again. He now does light labor work despite his twisted left hand. He and Maria also now own and operate a small

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grocery in one of Sao Luis' poorer neighborhoods.

Auleriano's scars have virtually vanished. Two years after the incident, he began going to Crab Island to get wood once again and continued going there until 1991, all without anything unusual happening. But he gave that up and now works as a security guard for a construction company. Neither Apolinario nor Firmino has ever gone back to Crab Island.

Another Crab Island Death

That is not the end of the Crab Island story. Virtually the same thing happened nine years later to another crew, with one man dying, another being burned and two others mysteriously stricken.

On April 28, 1986, the four other men sailed in a similar boat to Crab Island to get wood. They worked for two days cutting more than three hundred poles and stacking them on the bank next to the boat.

On April 30, they finished working at six o'clock, and one of the men, Juvencio, twenty-two, began cooking supper. Verissimo, twenty-one, said he wasn't feeling well and asked Juvencio for garlic to rub on his arms to make him feel better, but Juvencio suddenly became dizzy and fell to the deck unconscious. In quick succession, the other two men, Anselmo and Lazaro, both in their forties, also passed out.

No one knows what happened to Verissimo. Lazaro regained consciousness at noon the next day, eighteen hours later, and found Verissimo lying on the deck dead. There were no marks on him, but a little blood had trickled from his mouth.

Anselmo awoke two hours later, and Juvencio revived about five o'clock, almost twenty-four hours after he passed out. The right side of his head was burned and swollen.

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Anselmo and Lazaro tried to load the wood onto the boat but gave up after getting less than thirty poles on board. They began sailing back to Sao Luis, but it was difficult because all three were sick and nauseated.

Loud Crashing Noise

The second Crab Island death wasn't news outside of Sao Luis, either. I happened to go to Sao Luis five months after it happened and learned about it from Monica Carneiro and Ana Teresa Britto, the principal interpreters during my investigation of the first case. They helped me find Juvencio, who told me what had happened.

As in the first case, none of the three survivors knows what happened that night, except that all three got dizzy and passed out. Port authorities questioned them and told me they believe the men were telling the truth. The men were certain food poisoning was not to blame. They hadn't yet eaten and were feeling well until they became dizzy. Authorities also discounted the possibility that any kind of poisonous gas seeping from the swampy land could have been the cause. Juvencio said no one smelled any unusual odors before getting dizzy.

No autopsy was performed on Verissimo. As in the first case, by the time the boat reached port, his body was badly decomposed. Verissimo's death certificate simply lists the cause as "undetermined."

The UFO connection in this case is also tenuous. One unusual thing happened shortly before the men passed out. They heard a loud crashing noise in the brush somewhere near the boat. In the darkness, they couldn't see anything, and they don't know what caused the noise.

The only way to get to the island is by boat or helicopter, and the men weren't aware of anyone else being on the island with them. UFO buffs may see the crashing noise as a clear indication that a UFO landed, crushing trees

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or bushes in its way, while debunkers might claim it was just a tree falling down. There is no way to prove either is right, but the men would have recognized the sound of a falling tree.

When Monica, Ana Teresa and I interviewed Juvencio in his home, a number of neighbors gathered around to listen. One man in the crowd said he'd had a UFO encounter in a similar boat not far from Crab Island one night in 1983. His boat was anchored in a stream on the western side of the bay when a big bright object came down and hovered overhead, shining a light down on the boat. The man and his companions dived overboard and hid in the bushes until the UFO went away. He said people in several other boats in the area also had UFO encounters that year.

Both Lazaro and Anselmo were in the interior the two times I've been in Sao Luis since the second incident, and I've never talked to them. However, I saw Juvencio again in 1992. He said he was in good health, but Anselmo and Lazaro both now feel numbness in their legs, while Lazaro sometimes has dizzy spells and headaches.

The two cases are strikingly similar, except that none of the men in the first incident felt dizzy at any time. It's very possible that UFOs were not involved in either case, since the men remember nothing unusual, and there were no other witnesses. But if UFOs weren't to blame, then some other phenomenon just as bizarre was responsible. Either way, it is all part of a strange mystery that injures people and leaves some dead.

1. The state medical examiner’s office.
2. There is a remarkable similarity between Firmino’s serious burn and coma and what happened in a case investigated by Hulvio Aleixo in the Valley of the Old Women. In Florestal one afternoon, an elderly woman was found unconscious in her backyard with a bad

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burn on one arm. She was taken to a hospital, where she later recovered. The burn was so severe that she needed skin grafts, and it took three months to heal. No one knew what caused the burn, and she didn't have any idea how it happened. For some days before this occurred, people living in the area had seen strange balls of fire flying through the sky. Some people thought there was a connection between her burn and the fireballs.

3. Several years later, Ana Teresa remarked: "You know, that was dangerous."

Chapter Twenty

VAMPIRES IN THE SKY

UFOs have been deadlier in Colares than perhaps any other place in the world. Colares is one of thirty villages at the mouth of the Amazon river where for more than a year people weren't safe from UFOs even inside their own homes. UFOs would beam down rays of light that would penetrate roofs as if they didn't exist. Sometimes the beams would strike someone and, at other times, they would snake around as if searching for something. Terrified inhabitants would jump out of the way, but some got burned anyway.

This happened in a broad area only fifteen to thirty miles north of the busy metropolis of Belem. Just how many persons were injured will never be known, but in Colares alone approximately forty were burned and two of them died. A third person died three years later, possibly as a result of the UFO burns she suffered.

In addition, a pregnant woman lost her baby after being hit by a beam of light, and a dog died after a UFO shined a light on it when it was barking at the UFO.

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The *discos* were seen so often that the Air Force conducted an official investigation in the area for months. A captain and a number of sergeants from the Belem air base questioned hundreds of people who'd had sightings and harmful encounters. They also reportedly administered drugs to help calm people down. The information that the team gathered, plus numerous photographs of UFOs that the investigators themselves took, were sent to Air Force headquarters in the nation's capital, Brasilia, but none of the findings or photos have ever been officially released.

Sightings and encounters began in July 1977, were particularly heavy in the last four months of the year, and continued sporadically through November 1978. UFOs were reportedly seen in thirty communities, with Colares, Mosqueiro Island and Baia do Sol seemingly getting the brunt of the visits.[1]

Doctor Treats Burns

With the results of the military's investigation still secret, the principal source for the number of injuries and deaths in Colares is Wellaide Cecim Carvalho, who was the only doctor on the island when the sightings began in 1977.[2] Then twenty-four, she was in charge of the small state-run hospital in Colares, serving from December 1976 to December 1977. She's now a doctor of public health for the state of Para, dealing with children, cholera and AIDS.

Wellaide lived through the worst months of the UFO attacks, and she discussed them during an interview in her Public Health office in Belem on July 15, 1993, with Daniel Rebisso interpreting for us.

Q. How many people did you treat for injuries connected to the sightings in Colares in 1977?

A. Approximately forty people, mostly adults.

Q. What kind of injuries were they?

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A. Mostly burns on the chest, like sunburns, near the face, the throat and chest.

Q. Most of the people were like that?

A. Yes. The burns usually covered an area of ten to twenty centimeters.

Q. Almost as big as a soccer ball?

A. Yes...The skin peeled off. These burns healed quickly. Usually it takes about seventy-two hours for burned skin to peel. UFO burns begin to peel almost immediately.

Q. Peeled off and healed quickly?

A. Yes. Very interesting cases. I could see two small puncture wounds in the center of these burns.

Q. In all of these cases?

A. Yes, in all. All had irritation, swelling, redness. Very red.

Q. Almost always in the chest and throat and face?

A. Yes.

Q. A ray of light hit them?

A. Yes.

Q. This is what people told you?

A. Yes. I know of two deaths.

Q. Two deaths?

A. Yes, a man and a woman. The woman was taken to Belem...Eight hours later, after I treated her for burns, she died here in Belem of a heart attack, and that morning she had a large burn on her chest.

Q. Do you remember her name?

A. No. I remember another woman who had her hands burned by a light from a UFO and a great burn on her chest. She was working--

Q. But not the same woman?

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A. No. This other one was sewing at home at night when a UFO arrived and shined a light through the garden. She was on her veranda. Her hands were badly burned, and she said the cloth was burned, too.

Q. Do you remember the month the woman died?

A. September 1977.

Q. You also said a man died?

A. And then the man died. He was a fisherman.

Q. One month later?

A. More or less, yes.

Q. Do you remember the approximate age of the woman or man?

A. She was forty-four to forty-five years old and the man was younger, thirty-two.

Q. What kind of injuries did he have? Was he burned?

A. The same burns on the chest. The document from the government didn't specify the cause of death. There was no autopsy. The Air Force didn't allow an autopsy.

Q. Was the Air Force there at the time these two people died?

A. Yes. They arrived in Colares in August or September 1977.

Q. Hollanda?[3]

A. Yes. Hollanda's team. They had drugs to calm people down because many people were very frightened. All of my patients were burned. I did blood tests on them, and all had low levels of hemoglobin.

Q. This is not normal?

A. No.[4]

Q. The woman who died, she was burned and then she went to the hospital and died of a heart attack. The man who

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died, did he go to the hospital or did he die at his home?

A. They both died the same day they were burned. He died at home in Colares, the same day, about two hours later after I talked with him.

Q. What was his occupation?

A. He was a fisherman, and the woman was a domestic worker...

Q. Did you believe these people (who had been burned) when they came to you and told you what happened?

A. Not at first, I didn't believe them.

Q. When did you start believing?

A. At first I thought they were crazy, but after about the fifth case, I began to take it seriously...For a long time the sheriff, the priest and I were the only professionals in Colares. When the UFOs came to Colares, many people left. Only three professionals remained there. No stores were open. We had little to eat except eggs and farinha. The fishermen wouldn't fish because they were afraid.

Q. You treated about forty people over how long a period?

A. About three months. Many people left the area.

Q. How long did you go without food, a week, two weeks?

A. September, October and November, no food as no fishermen would go out. Only eggs and farinha...

Q. You saw a UFO yourself?[5]

A. Yes, I saw a UFO in November (1977). It was a cylindrical thing. About six o'clock in the evening. My secretary was with me. She fainted.

Q. What did you think about the UFO?

A. I think the UFOs come from another place in the

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universe. It is stupid to think we're the only ones in the universe.

Q. What colors did you see on the UFO?

A. Metallic, silver. Part of it was a lighter color.

Q. How close was it?

A. About forty meters.

Q. For how many minutes?

A. A few minutes. I don't know how long because I was fascinated by it. More than ten minutes. It was very beautiful.

Q. Several other people saw this?

A. Yes. Everybody else was afraid, and they ran home. I was the only one who stayed on the street. Everyone yelled for me to run, but I stayed.

Q. This was near the beach?

A. About two hundred meters. People were shouting at me to run, but I didn't. I was too fascinated...One time a UFO flew very low. It was going to land. People shot at it and threw stones to drive it away, but Hollanda's team arrived at that moment and shouted: "No! No! No! Don't do that!" But people were very frightened...Many people said they could see people in UFOs like me, with blond hair, long blond hair. Many people said this. They said I was like the extraterrestrials. I was the only woman there with blond hair...The UFO I saw circled and made rings in the sky. It was beautiful, beautiful, beautiful! The Air Force knows about this case, but the Air Force told people not to talk about these cases.

Q. Hollanda?

A. Hollanda's team. But I don't forget.

She said she began keeping a record of the people she treated but later destroyed her notes. Brazil was then under

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a military government, and she got worried about official reaction to the record keeping.

No autopsy was performed on the woman who died, she said, and the death certificate stated simply that the woman had suffered a heart attack. It made no mention of the burns on her chest. Wellaide said she thought that was strange because she had seen the burns that same morning, and the victim had been very agitated and frightened. This led Wellaide to believe the UFO aggression could have brought on the heart attack.

UFOs Go Into River

I learned about the Colares-area cases in December 1978 and have gone to Colares three times, in February 1979, July 1981 and July 1993. On the first visit, people said they'd seen UFOs going into and out of the Amazon River near Colares. Some had also seen glowing blue objects moving about under the surface of the water. They were frightened and felt threatened by them.

Rosil Aranha De Oliveira, thirty-six, who owned a store on the beach at Colares, told me: "I often go fishing at night, and I get out to this spot, and we can see these lighted things coming at great speed, and when they get close, they just stop. Sometimes they go into the water and sometimes they don't."

He had seen UFOs going into the river three times, twice in 1978 and the third time on February 14, just two days before the interview. At three o'clock in the morning, he said, he and his brother, Sebastiao, eighteen, were in a boat when a blue light went into the river about one- hundred-fifty yards from shore.

"Some men were fishing in other boats nearby, and they seemed to be frightened by it," Rosil said. "I could hear them shouting: 'The Thing! Here comes the Thing!'

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"I have seen a blue spot moving around in the water, and I've seen them come out of the water. It just goes up and away, a blue light, going north toward the ocean. Once I saw one sitting on another beach south of here for about fifteen minutes. I tried to figure out the shape, but all I could see was just the lights. Then it took off and went north, going up and down in a wavy motion as it went away."

During that same visit to Colares, Marcelo Do Nascimento, who was in charge of the village's electricity plant, said: "Many times we would see UFOs very high, and they'd be shining red beams of light down on the houses. It was like an airplane light pointed to the ground, like a streak of reddish light. Many people saw the UFOs, and the beams of red light would go inside the house and circle around as if they were searching for something."

He knew of at least three people who had been burned, but we couldn't locate any of them then, so I went back to Colares again in July 1981.

The Airstrip That Wasn't

You can get to Colares in one to two hours by car or boat but the quickest way is by plane. It's only twenty minutes by air from Belem, but it's risky because Colares has no airport or landing strip. Instead, your plane touches down in a churchyard and hurtles a hundred yards down a narrow lane with bushes smacking the wings before coming to a halt.

Taking off is scarier because by now you know — or should know — that the lane wasn't meant to be a runway. I've flown in there twice, but it wasn't until the second trip that I realized that.

The first time, in 1979, it was raining and a veteran jungle pilot was at the controls of our Cessna. He was concerned only with how muddy the ground was. He simply swooped down for a quick look, came around again and landed without hesitation. The bushes weren't so lush then,

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and they posed no threat as we squished along in the mud of what I assumed was a landing strip.

On the second trip I learned the truth. With me this time were Hollanda, the officer who had led the Air Force investigation, and Charles Tucker, a UFO investigator from Indiana. Our pilot was twenty-three-year-old Carlos Montenegro, who'd been flying for only three years. In Hollanda's earlier visits to Colares, he had gone by car or helicopter. I was the only one of the four who'd flown there in a plane.

On this day the weather was sunny and dry. Carlos took one look down at that lane and quickly vetoed any landing there. I assured him it could be done, but the wide dirt road leading into the village looked much safer, and Carlos started to land on it. However, he changed his mind when he spotted a bus coming toward Colares. Rather than have the driver and a bunch of passengers mad at him for blocking the road, he headed back to the churchyard.

As soon as we hit the hard, packed dirt in front of the church, things got very scary. Unlike a car, a plane has no undercoating to deaden the noise and virtually no springs. With the engine screaming at high pitch just a few feet in front of us, the wheels smacking every bump and rut, setting up a horrible racket, with each jolt instantly transmitted to our backbones, and with the bushes whacking our wing tips as if they were trying to rip them off — with all this the din was deafening. This wasn't at all the way I remembered it. In seconds, however, Carlos had braked to a halt just before we reached the end of the lane, spun around and taxied back to the churchyard.

Even before the propeller stopped turning over, we were surrounded by at least a hundred kids and adults. The circus had come to town.[6]

On this second visit, we found one of the burn victims,

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Claudiomira Rodrigues, who was working at a nearby farm when we walked up to her house. One of the boys who had greeted our plane ran to the field to bring her back.

While we waited, her husband, Manoel, told us a twenty-three-year-old woman named Domingas had just died, three years after getting burned by a UFO. He said Domingas' health had been bad ever since she was burned, and her family believed the burn caused her death.

'Man' in Diving Suit

Claudiomira, a short, thin woman, finally arrived. As people gathered around to listen, she sat on a bench outside her house and told us her story, with Hollanda interpreting.

"I was sleeping in a hammock in the house of a friend with five or six children when a beam of light burned me," she said. "It was eleven o'clock at night in September 1978 when it happened. The Air Force people were here studying the cases. I saw very clearly a bright light outside, very strong, and the air became warmer and warmer.

"The first time the light shined through the window, it was green. It touched my head and passed across my face. I woke up, and the color changed to red, like when you put your hand in front of a flashlight.

"I could see a person, but only from the chest up. I think it was a man, but he had on what was like a diving suit. I saw the face of the man, and his eyes were very small. He had an instrument like a pistol. He pointed the weapon at me and shined the beam three times, hitting me in the chest all three times almost in the same place. It was very hot. I think each time he took blood."

The burns left three, little, pinpoint scars in a triangle on the upper right side of her chest. She tried to explain what the scars looked like, then tried to pull the top of her blouse down to show us. But the blouse wouldn't go down far

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enough. Finally, with a shrug, she simply lifted her blouse and showed us three tiny marks in a triangular pattern just above her right breast.

"It was hot and it hurt," she said. "It was like being stuck with a needle. I bled at all three points. At the moment it happened I got very thirsty. I was terrified, but I couldn't move my legs. I was paralyzed. I was very frightened, and I screamed and screamed. My cousin, Maria Isaete, was sleeping in the same room. She woke up and saw the light and she screamed, too."

The man and the light disappeared and, a few minutes later, Maria helped Claudiomira get to the Colares hospital, where she was treated for her burns. She stayed until four o'clock in the morning and then went back home.

"For many weeks I had headaches and fever," she said.

She said several times that the beam of light was sucking blood from her. We kept asking how she knew it was taking her blood, but we never got a satisfactory explanation.

Nascimento, the man in charge of the electricity plant, mentioned the same thing on my first visit to Colares. "People think the UFOs come to take blood," he said. "I know one man who says the UFOs took blood from him."

Officer Sees UFO

Hollanda said that during the Air Force investigation, he saw a UFO while he was interviewing Claudiomira in 1978.

"We were studying cases on orders from my commander," he said. "He was interested in knowing what was happening here. The people were afraid of being burned by the UFOs. We had equipment to photograph the UFOs, and we were on the beach. We saw this thing crossing the sky at about seven-thirty in the evening. It was in the low clouds, shining intermittently at one-second intervals, blinking. Everybody in Colares saw it.

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"I was talking to Claudiomira when it crossed again at the same height, about three hundred meters high. It was just like a barrel. I saw this shape after we processed the film, but during the sighting all we saw was the light."[7]

One of the people most knowledgeable about the Colares-area cases is Daniel Rebisso, who interpreted for me during the interview with Dr. Wellaide Carvalho. Daniel, in his late thirties, is a biologist with the state health department in Belem, dealing with diseases transmitted to humans by bats, monkeys and other animals.

Woman Loses Baby

He became interested in UFOs while earning his degree in the southern Brazilian city of Curitiba in the early 1980s. On his return to Belem, he spent several months investigating UFO reports throughout northeastern Brazil and has written a book on what he learned.[8]

"The people in this area call the UFOs *chupa-chupa*, and they believe they were sucking energy and perhaps blood from victims," he said when we first met in 1992. "Dr. Carvalho saw small puncture wounds in victims. She thought blood had been taken out of the arms. But it was quickly. It is not similar to the attack of vampire bats because, when a vampire attacks, he bites. It wasn't like that."

Daniel began investigating the Colares cases in 1985. He has since located a number of people who were burned but has never learned the identity of the ones who died.

One tragic incident that he uncovered occurred in Tapiapanema, a settlement of three or four houses in the interior of Mosqueiro Island. Seventeen-year-old Silvia Maria Trinidade, who was five months pregnant, was hit by a beam of light from a UFO. The incident left her emotionally distraught. She lost her baby, and her marriage broke up. She now lives alone.

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This incident occurred about six o'clock on the night of October 29, 1977, as Silvia and her husband, Benedito, twenty-four, were lying down resting. It was dark outside.

"Silvia woke up and saw a light in the sky," said Daniel. "It was a UFO. Suddenly she saw a beam of light from the UFO entering her house, and it touched her arm. She screamed, awakening her husband, Benedito. The neighbors ran outside and saw the bright object. One of them shot at the UFO with a rifle, and it disappeared. The man thought he saw two people near the house, just shadows, but couldn't see who or what they were. Because Silvia was very upset and nervous, her husband put her in a small boat and took her to the hospital in Mosqueiro."

In a visit to Mosqueiro in July 1993, Daniel and I located Benedito and talked to him.

"When the light hit Silvia, she began to scream, and I took her to another room, but the light hit me, and I felt strange," Benedito said. "I couldn't talk and Silvia fainted. The light went away and, after a few minutes, I could talk."

Silvia revived but was so upset that Benedito put her in a boat and started rowing down the river to take her to the hospital in Mosqueiro, ten miles away. It took about an hour, and on the way they saw the UFO again.

"We were in the boat, and the UFO flew over the river several times," Benedito said. "It followed us and shined a light down on the river for ten or fifteen minutes. It didn't make any noise, and it didn't shine the light on us, just the river. It was about eighty meters away. Then the UFO flew over the jungle and disappeared."

Silvia wasn't burned by the light but did have a bruise on the inside of her left elbow. She was in the hospital for a week and lost her baby two months later.

Daniel and I also talked with her mother, Osmarina De Souza, who told us Silvia was badly frightened by the

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incident and has never fully recovered. Silvia and Benedito are still married but no longer live together.

The incident had one other victim, a little dog named Victoria which was owned by one of their neighbors at Tapiapanema.

"When I was helping Silvia, I could hear Victoria barking," Benedito said. "Then a light from the UFO passed over Victoria, and she stopped barking. For many days after that, Victoria didn't eat much, and no one heard her bark again. Three or four weeks later she died."

Reports Leaked

Some of the reports that Hollanda and his team sent to Brasilia were leaked almost immediately to civilian UFO investigators. However, it wasn't until 1991 that I learned of this and was able to obtain copies. They contain brief summaries of two hundred eighty-one incidents in Colares and twenty-nine other communities. Of these, one hundred ninety-two occurred in 1977 and eighty-nine in 1978. Also included were seventeen detailed maps and twenty photos of UFOs taken by Hollanda's team.

The documents I received were photocopies of photocopies, and the UFO in the photos looked mostly like blobs of white light in a black sky. On the back of each photo, however, were finely drawn sketches of what Hollanda's team had seen as they took the photographs.

Daniel Rebisso also had obtained copies of some of Hollanda's reports but they aren't the same ones I have. His documents contain long, detailed accounts of some incidents. Neither his reports nor mine mention any injuries or deaths, yet we know Hollanda's team investigated many if not all such cases. In addition, a neurologist named Pedro Rosado told Daniel in 1991 that an Air Force colonel had shown him many photos of burn victims. Dr. Rosado died in 1992.

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During our visit to Colares in July 1993, Daniel and I talked with Manoel Emidio Campo, sixty-six, who was burned in 1977.

"I was living on a farm close to Colares and was asleep," Emidio said. "It was about two o'clock in the morning. I woke up and saw a light coming through the roof, very bright, white. Then I saw my leg was burned."

He pointed to his left thigh and said the burn was a little bigger than an orange. "It had a little hole in the middle and was very, very red. It hurt a lot."

He didn't go to the hospital for treatment because he was afraid to leave his house. "I was very frightened because people said that light killed people," Emidio said. "A day or two later I was interviewed by the Air Force people, and they took pictures of my leg."

Somewhere hidden away in the Brazilian government's archives are greatly detailed reports on what may well be the most thoroughly investigated series of UFO encounters in one area, incidents in which many people were burned and several were killed. The government's reasons for withholding this information aren't known, but the reports would go a long way toward proving UFOs are very real.

1. Co-LAR-ayz, Moce-CARE-oh Island and BYE-uh doo Sol.
2. Vuh-LYE-gee.
3. Uyrange Hollanda, the officer who headed the official investigation. He was then a captain, and he retired in 1992 as a lieutenant colonel.
4. This indicates anemia, but low levels are common in people who are malnourished, and most people living in Colares at that time didn’t have balanced diets, according to Daniel Rebisso, a biologist.
5. I had chatted with her briefly in 1992 and knew a little

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of what she had seen and heard.

6. It would be impossible to land on that lane today. Over the years it has been washed out by rains and recreated by cars and wagons countless times, and neither the lane nor the ruts go in a straight line any longer. Electricity wires also cross the lane. Colares itself has grown enormously and has paved streets. The highway leading to it is also now paved, and the Colares beach is one of many in the area that attract huge throngs from Belem on weekends.
7. A few days later, Hollanda described for Tucker and me some of the UFOs that he and his men photographed during their investigations. Much of what he had to say is covered in Chapter Thirty.
8. *Vampiros Extraterrestres na Amazonia*.

Chapter Twenty-One

THE DEADLY 'TRAIN*

For sheer terror, few cases can match the encounter that led to the death of Cicilio Higinio Pereira. He was only thirty when he died, and there is little doubt that a UFO was responsible.

I never talked to Cicilio. He died in 1976, a year after I first became interested in UFOs and two years before I made my first trip to Brazil. All of my information about Cicilio comes from Hulvio Aleixo, one of the most experienced, cautious and thorough investigators in Brazil.

Cicilio was a poor, illiterate farm worker who lived with his mother in the country near Jaboticatubas in the Valley of the Old Women.[1] This is about an hour's drive north of Belo Horizonte, where Hulvio lives.

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On the evening of August 9, 1976, Cicilio was walking home from Jaboticatubas with Anita and Geralda, two older women who were neighbors of his. They were on a dirt road in an isolated area where there are few homes. A few minutes after eight o'clock, as they were walking down a hill past some charcoal ovens near the road, they spotted a bright light in the sky.

They soon realized it was coming straight toward them, getting closer and closer. Strange lights in the sky were rather common then, and all three were frightened.

"Let's run," Geralda said. "I'm really scared!"

All three began running, but Cicilio didn't get very far. He was wearing rope-soled sandals, and suddenly a strap broke on one of the sandals. He couldn't keep it on, and he couldn't run barefoot because sharp stones in the road cut his feet. He stopped, but the women kept running.

Like an Open Umbrella

"I was very afraid," he told Hulvio later. "They didn't want to wait for me, so they ran on, and one of them yelled back at me: 'It looks like a flying saucer!"'

Cicilio dropped down on one knee and tried to fix the strap, but calamity struck before he could finish.

"Suddenly 'the Train' was down right above me," he said, referring to the strange object. "It was like an open umbrella, but it was huge. I was yelling: 'Help me! Dear Mother of Jesus, help me! Dear Jesus, save me!' Then the light rose up again, and it got so bright I could see a pin on the ground."

Cicilio had been carrying a small bag of food, but he threw it away as the object came down a again, this time so close that he could have reached up and touched it.

"I fell down from shock and fright and tried to get away from it. I was thrashing around and screaming for help."

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Cicilio tried to roll off the road to get away from "the Train," but it didn't help.

"I felt a shock. It stopped in the air. When I got shocked, it lifted me up a little bit. I felt very cold, and there was a terrible cold wind. I could hear a small humming noise."

As this was happening, there was a smell of sulfur in the air, he said, and when the UFO came very close to him, he could see what looked like two or three small men inside the object.

"I saw little men of this height (about four feet tall) inside the Train. Then the Train disappeared."

By now the women had vanished from sight also, and Cicilio could barely walk. Almost immediately, he felt sick and began throwing up, spitting up bile and suffering mostly from the dry heaves. He ran the rest of the way home as fast as he could, arriving exhausted, confused, scared and still nauseated.

He continued to throw up the rest of the night. It was the beginning of a sickness that eventually ended in his death.

Hulvio heard about the incident a few days later and at first had trouble locating Cicilio. Eventually a guide led him to a house that was deep in the woods and difficult to get to. There he found Cicilio sick in bed. He was very lethargic, depressed and demoralized, but managed to tell Hulvio what had happened to him on the road that night.

Why Cicilio called the UFO a "Train" isn't known. He wasn't able to describe the object except when it came down close to him.

"The thing comes like a headlight, and the moment it gets close, it looks like an umbrella," Cicilio said. "The light is green and another one is yellow, like the headlight on a truck. And it blinks."

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He couldn't give any details about the little men but said he saw them through a door of some kind that opened and closed.

Other People Attacked

Hulvio learned later that other people in the area had encounters at that time. A neighbor named Henrique had twice been chased by UFOs. A motorist had engine trouble one night, left his car, started walking and was chased nearly a thousand feet by a UFO. And a woman was burned as she clung to a fence post to keep from falling down in fear when a UFO came close to her.

Hulvio, and members of his Belo Horizonte UFO group, spent many years investigating UFO cases in the Valley of the Old Women, and they built up a network of people who would keep them informed of sightings and encounters. About two months after Hulvio interviewed Cicilio, one of his informants phoned to tell him Cicilio had died.

"He eventually got out of bed but wasn't able to do much," Hulvio said when he first told me Cicilio's story. "Just when people thought he was getting better, he died. The impression everyone had was that after this encounter, Cicilio lost all of his energy.

"No one knows why he died. The man came from a poor family and, in all that time, he never saw a doctor. Since there was no doctor available to issue a death certificate, the family burned the body."

The exact cause of death will never be known nor even the exact nature of his terminal illness. The fact that he began vomiting and became sick almost immediately after the extremely close encounter, and never got better, clearly indicates the UFO's presence had a detrimental affect on his health. It hovered within three feet of him and was so bright he had difficulty seeing. Whatever power source it had,

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allowed it to move silently and give off a brilliant light at the same time. This means it could have emitted electromagnetic waves of some kind that damaged or weakened Cicilio.

During that moment when the UFO lifted Cicilio off the ground, he felt a terrible cold wind blowing at the same time. This is much the same thing that happened to three people in Rio Grande do Norte -- Francisca Bispo De Assis at Sitio Timbauba in 1979 and Maria Dos Dores Lopes, her daughter, Marileide, and their pet dog in Bom Jesus in 1983.

And in March 1991 Jorge Fernando De Sousa had to struggle hard, crouching down and hanging onto the grass with both hands, to keep from being drawn up into a UFO as a cold wind swirled around him near Lake Apodi in western Rio Grande do Norte.

There was another similarity between Cicilio's encounter and those involving the women. Francisca also described the UFO that pulled her into the sky as looking like a big, open umbrella, while Maria said the UFO she saw was shaped like a tub.

These cases cover a span of fifteen years and occurred in areas fifteen hundred miles apart, an indication of the continuing presence of hostile UFOs throughout much of Brazil.

1. Jah-BOO-chee-cah-TOO-bus.

Chapter Twenty-Two

HUNTING THE HUNTERS

Deaths have been reported in UFO encounters since the 1950s, but they are rare, and there may have been no more than two or three dozen in the world. In most cases, it's impossible to say a UFO was the direct cause of a death,

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usually because there were no witnesses. No one, to my knowledge, has actually seen a UFO kill anyone. Yet people have died during or soon after encounters, and most observers conclude that UFOs contributed to those deaths in some way.

Researchers thought they'd struck a bonanza when newspapers and magazines in Brazil and the United States published stories claiming that in October 1981 four hunters had been killed by UFOs in the mountains around Parnarama, a small town in the interior.

Parnarama at that time was rather difficult to reach. It is in Maranhao, but it's easier to get there from the state of Piaui to the east. Parnarama lies on the western bank of the Paraiba River, fifty miles south of Teresina, the capital of Piaui. The river separates the two states, and the terrain on both sides of the river consists of forested hills and low mountains.

When I first went to Parnarama in September 1986, the dirt road going south out of Teresina was in poor condition and in some parts was so sandy that our car once got stuck. Nearly two hours after leaving Teresina, we turned off at an unmarked spot in the road recognized only by the local residents, drove down a steep embankment and entered a lane that runs through woods. A half mile beyond we came to the river.

From that point, Parnarama is only two hundred yards away, but there's no bridge across the river. Instead, a ferryboat big enough to carry only one car or truck at a time takes you across the river in five minutes.

Even then, though, things were changing. Part of the difficulty in getting to Parnarama was long traffic delays caused by construction crews who were building a new highway. By the time I returned two years later, the dirt road had been replaced by an excellent two-lane asphalt highway,

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and now getting to Parnarama is almost a breeze. Almost but not quite. The turnoff to the ferry remains unmarked and can easily be missed.

Parnarama is hot and dusty and has about three thousand inhabitants. Everyone we met there was quite friendly. One of the positive things about investigating UFO reports in Brazil is that most people are willing to help you find whoever you're looking for. In talking to perhaps a thousand UFO witnesses and people who were just giving us directions during ten visits to Brazil, I remember only three who became hostile when the subject of UFOs came up. None of them were in Parnarama.

Because the published stories about the deaths of four hunters had quoted the mayor and police chief of Parnarama, my friends and I went directly to the City Hall on that first visit in 1986.[1] Unfortunately, neither man was in office anymore, and neither was in Parnarama at that time.

However, as soon as we started asking about UFOs, we attracted a crowd. More than a dozen of us crowded around a long wooden table in the council chambers, and everybody seemed to be talking at the same time. Everyone had a UFO story to tell, but no one knew anything about four hunters being killed.

Zapped by UFO

The dead men named in the stories were Abel Boro, Raimundo Souza, Jose Vitoria, and Dionizio General. Each man allegedly had been hunting with companions, most of whom were named. It didn't matter. None of the people we were talking to had heard of any of them, dead or otherwise. Each name provoked a discussion, mainly over whether that was the victim's real name or nickname, because many people are better known by their nicknames. Still, no one recognized anyone we mentioned.

Gradually, one man began to dominate the

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conversation, and everyone stopped to listen. He was a tall, lanky thirty-three-year-old named Luis Silva Da Silveira who told us how a UFO zapped him in August 1985, just a year earlier.

"I was hunting with a friend about eight o'clock one night when we saw two green lights coming toward us," said Silva, who identified himself as a landowner. "We were scared. We jumped out of our hammocks and ran and hid in the bushes. I tried to shoot at it, but when I did, I got a shock. I felt paralyzed and couldn't fire my gun. I began to think it was the chupa-chupa."

The paralysis lasted less than a minute. By the time he was able to move again, the object had disappeared. The two men then ran all the way back to town. It took them more than two hours.

Silva began telling us about another incident involving a friend but suddenly remembered that a man had died near Parnarama, possibly because of a UFO.

"His name was Jose Batista Lima, but he was better known by his nickname, Jose do Ramao," Silva said. "He and a friend had been hunting. Ramao had shot a bird and was going to sleep in his hammock when he was attacked by a light.[2] The friend ran away and, when he came back later, Ramao was dead."

Silva couldn't remember when this happened. "Maybe last year. Three or four years ago?"

None of the other men remembered either, but several added details, saying Ramao had purple splotches on his neck. No one else knew anything about Ramao's death.

We were then taken into the office of the new mayor, Raimundo Silva Da Silveira, who happened to be the brother of the landowner we'd just talked to. The mayor told us there had been at least one hundred sightings in the Parnarama area in just the past year alone, with the most recent

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occurring just ten days before our visit.

Pulsating Light

One witness to that latest sighting was a city councilwoman. We went to her home, and she told us that she and two men were fishing in a lake at night when a UFO in the form of a big, lighted object came toward them. They hid in the bushes as it hovered over the lake one hundred fifty yards away from them for several minutes. She said the light was so bright that she and her companions could see the fish swimming in the lake.

Earlier in City Hall, a man named Antonio Vitorino Da Silva, thirty-eight, told us that he and a friend were hunting near their homes south of Parnarama one night three or four weeks earlier when a pulsating light as big as the moon came toward them. They could see red, yellow, blue and green lights around it. They ran to their homes, where they pointed out the UFO to their families.

Antonio said that before the UFO arrived, he and his friend had been burning babacu shells (which look somewhat like huge pine cones) to keep mosquitoes away. When they ran back to their homes and watched the UFO, they could see the UFO shining a light down on the burning shells.

Antonio also said a brother-in-law had been stunned by a beam of light from a UFO in the same area and was paralyzed for a while, but in the confusion surrounding the council table, we failed to get the details of that incident.

In September 1988, I went to Parnarama again with Fortaleza investigators Jean Alencar and Reginaldo Athayde, hoping to learn more about the alleged deaths, but we had no more luck than the first time.

Breaks Leg Running From UFO

Again we found people who'd had experiences with UFOs. One of them was Jose Morais Da Silva, known also as

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Jose Cosmo. He'd had three encounters, two of them in 1975.

"The first time was at midnight," he said. "My brother-in-law, Santiago, and I were going to Bom Jesus on horseback.[3] Suddenly a big, bright light appeared in front of us. It came quickly and hovered about thirty meters above us, and we felt heat from it. I had a revolver and tried to shoot at it, but the UFO disappeared."

He and Santiago continued on until they leached a friend's house. "We were telling him about the UFO when the UFO came again and shined a light on our horses. The horses stayed quiet, and the UFO disappeared."

The second incident occurred near his home at Gaveao, fifteen miles southwest of Parnarama. "I was chasing an armadillo with a friend when we suddenly saw a bright light coming in our direction. I said, 'It must be the chupa-chupa,' and we ran into the woods and hid behind bushes."

Jose Cosmo broke a leg during the encounter. "It happened when I fell down in a hole trying to hide," he said. "The UFO slowly circled for an hour looking for us."

His third encounter was the worst of all. It occurred in September 1984 when he and his son, Antonio Francisco, then ten, were fishing at night in the Paraiba River.

"It was about seven P.M. when I saw a light about fifty meters high coming toward me," said Jose Cosmo. "We tried to hide under roots along the river bank. A light rain began falling. Then the light turned off, and I thought the UFO had gone away. I began fishing again, and suddenly I saw my shadow on the water, and I turned and saw the UFO land on the river bank about twenty meters away from me. My son and I ran and hid under roots again. I was burned this time when the UFO attacked me with a beam of light. The boy wasn't burned.

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Nightmares About UFOs

"Afterwards I became very dizzy and had a headache and backache. There was a house near the river, and I sent the boy there to hide. I couldn't see the shape of the UFO, just the light. It was just two or three meters above the ground and about twenty meters from me.

"About midnight the UFO moved to another part of the river and shined a light on some other fishermen. I moved to another hiding place, and then the UFO came back to the river bank near me and stayed there until four A.M. It made a humming sound like a bicycle on a highway.

"I have dreams about this, and in the dreams I think the UFO is coming to hit me again with the beam of light. I was afraid the UFO would suck the blood out of me."

There, again, is the belief that UFOs suck blood out of people. We asked him why he thought the UFO would do that.

"Because my mother-in-law knows the name of a person who died from the UFO with no blood, with some bites on his arm," he said.

Widow Has Doubts

His mother-in-law, Maria Jesus, was in the house during the interview, and he called her over. She gave us the name of a man who supposedly died, but she didn't know anything firsthand. She then gave us the name of still another man who supposedly knew the details, but we didn't have time to look for him.

On this second trip, we again tried to find the hunter who was with Jose do Ramao, the man who we'd been told in 1986 was killed by a UFO. Again, no luck. We were told that the man was in Sao Luis, hundreds of miles to the north.

This time, however, we did find Ramao's widow, Maria Dos Reis Batista De Lima — and she was not convinced that

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a UFO killed her husband.

"He died August 26, 1982," she told us. "He was forty years old. I have doubts about the UFO because the man who was with him told me my husband ate so much just before he died. When he got through eating, he had coffee and water, and then he told this man he felt bad. This man went off to chase an animal and, when he came back, he found my husband dead."

So, maybe Ramao died during an encounter and maybe he didn't. No autopsy was performed, and the cause of death isn't known. Until we're able to find the man who was hunting with him, we will never know what happened the night Ramao died.

Obviously he didn't die in October 1981, the month the newspapers and magazines claimed the four hunters were killed by UFOs. It now seems likely that none of those deaths occurred. The various articles agreed only on the names of the victims. Some gave conflicting information as to the details of the alleged deaths, the names of the companions, and the locations of the incidents.

A number of investigators, including noted UFO researcher and author Jacques Vallee, have now made at least eight trips to Parnarama, but none of us was able to confirm the UFO deaths reported by those publications. In *CONFRONTATIONS, A Scientist's Search for Alien Contact* (Ballantine Books, 1990), Vallee reported that the former police chief said one hunter, Raimundo Souza, did die, apparently during or after an encounter, but had fallen out of a tree and may have suffered a heart attack.[4] No autopsy was performed, and there was no evidence a UFO caused the death.

None of the victims or their hunting companions named in the articles were known to the people that we talked to in Parnarama during our two visits there. Nor did anyone

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recognize the names of the localities where the deaths allegedly occurred.

Researchers Didn't Know

Furthermore, excellent, very detailed topographical maps are available for every region of Brazil, showing even individual farms and houses, and the Parnarama map doesn't show any of the communities named in the newspaper and magazine articles.

Adding to the doubts about the authenticity of the published reports was the fact that the four UFO investigators from Teresina who accompanied us on the first visit to Parnarama had never heard of the alleged deaths until we talked to them, and Teresina is just fifty miles away.

There's no doubt that the region around Parnarama has had plenty of sightings and encounters, and UFOs are probably still visiting the area. As for Ramao, his death may or may not be related to a UFO encounter. Various accounts of what his hunting companion reportedly saw or heard supports either view.

It is my belief that the four deaths in October 1981 never occurred or, if they did, not as UFO deaths as was reported. I suspect that a newspaper or magazine published a story based on speculation about the cause of the death of Raimundo Souza and embellished upon it. Other publications then picked up the story and published variations of it without making a serious effort to check its authenticity.

This type of thing happens, not only in Brazil but in the United States and, probably, many other countries as well. Some people never let facts get in the way of a good story.

1. Jean Alencar, a UFO investigator from Fortaleza, and four Teresina investigators, Pericles Dos Santos Reinaldo Filho, Jose Alves de Souza Neto, Francisco Savio Pereira Pimentel, and Iran Barbosa Pimental

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Junior.

2. Sounds like Ha-MOAN.
3. Not to be confused with the Bom Jesus in Rio Grande do Norte near Natal. Many communities throughout the country are named Bom Jesus.
4. Vallee located the police chief of Sao Luis, and the chief denied quotes that had been attributed to him in the various stories.

Chapter Twenty-Three

STILLBIRTH BY TERROR

It was an encounter much like thousands of others in which people flee in terror when they're surprised by the sudden appearance of a UFO. In this case, two pregnant women ran for their lives when a UFO chased them. They escaped, but both paid a high price. One lost her baby, and the other gave premature birth to a child with heart problems and who has never walked since then.

Most encounters occur at night, but this one took place in daylight, late on a Monday afternoon in April 1982 on the beach near Pecem west of Fortaleza, Ceara. The sun was setting, and the women, Maria Das Gracas and Maria Merces De Paula, had been hunting for wood near a lake. With them were Maria Das Gracas' younger sister, Maria Neuma Ferreira Lima, and two children. The women were in their mid to late twenties.

I never met Maria Das Gracas, who lost her baby. I heard the story from Maria Merces when I visited Pecem with investigator Jean Alencar in September 1986.

"Maria Das Gracas and I were both pregnant, and we had gone to the bush near the lake to get wood," said Maria Merces. They planned to use the wood to make charcoal and

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were on their way home, walking peacefully, each of the three women carrying bundles of wood.

As they left the bush on the east side of the lake, Maria Neuma's six-year-old daughter, Fatima, said: "Mama, look at the big star!"

All turned to look.

"I saw a bright star, but I wasn't concerned about it," Maria Merces said. "We were trying to climb up a sand dune. Then Fatima yelled: 'It's coming after us!' We all quickly turned around and saw a reddish-blue fire, shining and giving off sparks. It was about two hundred meters away, very low, coming down toward us."

Run Across Dunes

Badly frightened, they threw the wood down and all began running toward a grove of trees on the top of a hill. Fatima and the other child, Maria Das Gracas' daughter, Marcia, eight, were crying and ran on ahead of their mothers, who were having difficulty running in the sand.

"We ran about five hundred meters over the dunes to the woods and, when we got inside the woods, the UFO passed over about fifty meters above us, going very slowly. It went toward the sea. It was like a fireball, about a third of a meter in diameter."

When they felt sure the UFO wasn't going to come back, they ran home. All were nauseated and had headaches for a week.

"Nine days later, Maria Das Gracas, who was two months pregnant, lost her baby, and Neuma became very nervous," said Maria Merces, who was seven months pregnant herself at the time. A few days later, Maria Merces gave birth prematurely to Kelvia.

"When Kelvia was born, she didn't cry," said Maria Merces. "She would drink only tea, not milk. She wouldn't eat

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anything."

As we talked, Maria was holding Kelvia, then four. She was a sweet, bright-eyed child, alert but silent.

"She's never walked," Maria Merces continued. "She talks sometimes. She has heart problems and is always weak and tired. The doctor thinks she's not normal."

The women blame the UFO for the stillbirth and the birth of an impaired child. It could have been just a coincidence, of course, but both coming so soon after such a horrifying experience certainly points to the UFO as the culpable party. Had the UFO never chased them, or given the impression it was chasing them, they wouldn't have run, and both might have had normal, healthy children today.

Maria Das Gracas is not the only woman to lose a baby because of a UFO encounter. Silvia Trinidade, as we have seen, lost hers after being hit by a light from a UFO on Mosqueiro Island during the long Colares-area UFO flap in 1977 and 1978. And, according to Belo Horizonte investigator Hulvio Aleixo, another pregnant woman, Fatima De Jesus, lost her baby fleeing from a UFO in 1987 near Esmeraldas in the Valley of the Old Women. Fatima, who was in the fifth month of her pregnancy, and another woman had run up a hill to escape from a UFO.

Still another pregnant woman lost her baby after an extremely unusual encounter in 1988. The victim this time was Joana Rodrigues Ferreira, then forty, who lived on a farm near Carnaubinha, Ceara.[1]

Joana and her daughter, Elisvalda, ten, left their house late one night, carrying baskets of vegetables. They were going to meet another woman, walk to the nearest road, take a bus into the small town of Paraipaba and sell the vegetables at the market there.

UFO's Scratching Sounds

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"We had gone about four hundred meters from the house when we saw a ball of light in the sky the color of fire," Joana said when we talked to her in 1991. "We went along, and it kind of disappeared behind a school. My daughter said: 'Let's not go any farther because that's a flying saucer.' But we continued on, and we soon came to a small stream. We took our sandals off and had them in our hands. We were carrying baskets of vegetables on our heads, and we put them down because we were going to wait for another woman who was going with us.

"When we got to the stream, the UFO went away and my daughter asked: 'Mama, do you think it's going to come back again?' And I said: 'No, it's not going to come back.' I began to comb my hair and, all of a sudden, it appeared again. It came down over a tree ten meters from us and stayed there.

"I didn't know what to do. I was terrified. It made a loud scratching noise. At first we didn't connect the noise to the flying saucer. It was over a tree, and we were five meters from the tree. It lit up everything around us very bright.

"Suddenly we saw two men who looked exactly alike standing near the tree. I don't know where they came from. They were small and short, about four feet tall. Their clothes were like aluminum. They glowed, reflecting the light. I couldn't see their eyes or faces because the light was so bright. They were just standing there three meters from me, making a noise -- 'tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk.'

"I was so terrified that I couldn't move. My daughter hooked her arm in mine and dragged me away from the men."

She and Elisvalda ran to a house about eighty yards away, banged on the door and screamed to be let in. "Senhor Martins, for God's sake, open the door, something's trying to

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get us!"

At first, Martins didn't hear them because his dogs were barking so loudly after being awakened by the noise the UFO was making.

"He opened the door just a little bit to let us squeeze in and then banged the door shut," Joana said. "He didn't look out at all."

Joana was so frightened that her body was shaking. Martins and his wife tried to get her to take some rum. She refused because she had been taking medicine but later relented and had a sip because she couldn't stop shaking.

It turned out that Joana and Elisvalda had arrived too early at the place where they were to meet the other woman going to market.

"We had gotten there at one o'clock in the morning, and we weren't supposed to be there until three o'clock," Joana said. "So we all settled down and waited. I had left everything there by the stream, my sandals, my purse, the vegetables, everything.

"When it got to be three o'clock, Mr. Martins put on his gun and got a light and took us to the point. By then the UFO was gone. When I told the other women in the market what happened, they told me I was lucky because the UFOs usually take your blood.

"I was five months pregnant, and for seven days after this happened, I was sick with headaches and fever and no energy. Then I went to the hospital in Paraipaba, and I miscarried there."

Tree Was Burned

Elisvalda didn't suffer any ill effects from the encounter. The day after this happened, Joana and others went back to the tree where she and Elisvalda had seen the two little men.

"The tree was burned, and all the leaves had dropped

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off," Joana said. "And where the light hit the ground, under where the UFO hovered, there was no more grass."

Joana and her family later moved to another farm. She's never gone back and doesn't know if the tree recovered.

This is a particularly notable case because of several unusual elements. First, the UFO spotted Joana and Elisvalda in the dark, disappeared momentarily and then suddenly reappeared only thirty feet away, making a strange screeching sound. The light that it emitted was so hot that it burned the tree, perhaps in the same manner that another UFO burned a tree that young Jerinaldo was hiding under near Acari.

As the frightened mother and daughter stood listening to the screeching sound, two small beings dressed in silvery garb just suddenly appeared under the tree ten feet away from them. Because the light was so bright, Joana and Elisvalda couldn't see their faces, but they could hear them making a fast 'tsk-tsk-tsking' noise. Joana was so terrified that her daughter had to pull her to safety. Finally, seven days later, Joana lost her unborn baby.

In only two of these four stillbirth cases did the pregnant women overexert themselves by running because they were badly frightened, one in the sand dunes near Pecem and the other on a hill in the Valley of the Old Women. In Joana's case and that of Silvia's, the young wife on Mosqueiro Island, neither ran. But they were so terrorized that they lost their babies.

These four women had three things in common: each was pregnant, each had what was probably the most traumatic experience of her life, and each lost her baby shortly after. I don't know the pregnancy histories of these women or whether they might have lost their babies later even if there had been no UFOs. But they all miscarried after

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having encounters, indicating the UFOs were a major factor in the deaths of their babies.

1. Jean Alencar was the first to investigate this case.

PART SIX

A WEIRD PHENOMENON

Chapter Twenty-Four

SILENT EXPLOSIONS

"It was beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, but we thought it was going to kill us. It was the most beautiful thing I ever saw in my life. It was gorgeous, but it was lethal."

Reinar Silva got excited telling about the night a UFO firebombed him and his wife, Alzerina, when they thought they were going to die.

It's an incident that helps illustrate not only how weird the phenomenon is but also shows that UFOs aren't necessarily what they seem to be — that is, "just" spaceships from other planets.

"When I talk about this I relive the trauma of it," Reinar said. "I'm prepared in my mind to meet aliens from different worlds, but I wasn't prepared for this kind of experience."

Reinar is a strong, husky man about five-foot-nine who looks like nothing would scare him.[1] He's a clerical worker for the city of Fortaleza, and he and Alzerina also own a small sidewalk lunch stand where they'd been working on the busy Friday night this happened. Sometime after midnight, they finally locked up and rode off on their motorcycle to go to their small farm south of Fortaleza. Things started happening at one-thirty a.m. on the highway fourteen miles south of

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Fortaleza.

"I was joking about a point of light we saw in the sky, and all of a sudden a big light came down above our heads," said Reinar, who was thirty-three when this happened on March 9, 1991. "It was ten to fifteen meters above us and sort of ahead of us. Our motorcycle stopped running and we thought something had happened to it.

"The light stayed above us for two minutes and we both were paralyzed with fright. Lights were going around it and we felt very hot. The ship was two stories tall, had a very pretty rainbow tail and it gave out very bright colored lights. On top was a transparent, luminous dome but we couldn't see anybody inside it. Alzerina was very frightened and started panicking. After two or three minutes, it disappeared very rapidly, in a matter of seconds."

He and Alzerina sat on the motorcycle for a moment, but before they could recover, their tormentor returned.

Transparent Ball

"It came back above us a second time," Reinar said. "It didn't make any noise. It was completely silent. The object stopped in the air. Then it disappeared again and finally we got the motorcycle going. I was afraid to say anything."

They went on down the highway but had gone only two miles when the UFO appeared once again.

"It came back a third time but didn't stop, and as it passed over us this time it dropped a transparent ball, like a big soap bubble, one and a half meters around," Reinar said. "Because of the lights reflecting off of it, it looked like it was on fire. The ball came down and blew up in front of us. Alzerina screamed and I put on the brakes. It was only about one and a half meters in front of us when it exploded. I would have gone into it if I hadn't hit the brakes. The ball of fire was a dark blue. It made no sound at all when it

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exploded."

The UFO then went away and they never saw it again.

Fortaleza UFO investigator Reginaldo Athayde heard about the incident and began investigating. He located three other people who had seen a UFO about the same time not far from where this happened to Reinar and Alzerina.

"They were in a car and said the UFO went up and down and zig-zagged through the clouds and then came back and lit them all up," Athayde said. "This was at Seis Bocas, only four kilometers from Reinar and Alzerina's encounter."

Alzerina, thirty-two at the time, had blisters on her face the day after the transparent ball exploded.

"My face got very red," she said. "I didn't feel any heat or anything when this happened and I was so terrified."

She believes she was burned not by the explosion in front of them but by exposure to the light from the UFO in the first encounter. She was sitting behind Reinar on the motorcycle and the light fell more on her than it did him. The blisters took about a week to heal.

Reinar drew a sketch of the UFO showing a sombrero-shaped object with a large fan-shaped tail extending from it. He said the tail was in rainbow colors, while the transparent dome was yellowish and the body of the object itself was green with yellow lights around it.

There are three unusual aspects to this incident. First, the UFO came back twice after the first encounter, as if it was uncertain what it wanted to do to these people. The only other major case that I know of in which a UFO came back to harass the victim again was the one in which Moises Campelo was levitated twice, three hundred miles to the southeast in Rio Grande do Norte, just ten weeks later.

The second strange feature is the dropping of a fiery-looking transparent bubble about five feet across that

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exploded just in front of the couple. People have reported seeing bits of flaming debris falling from UFOs, but dropping an explosive "ball of fire" directly in the path of two people on a motorcycle may be unique.

Had Reinar not braked in time, he and Alzerina might have been caught in the middle of the explosion. There's no way of knowing what might have happened to them if they had. Perhaps nothing. They felt no heat from the explosion nor any rush of air, and they heard absolutely nothing as the bubble burst.

This brings up the third angle -- the lack of sound as it blew up. Silent explosions have been reported before, but not often.

UFO Controls Car

On the same day we talked to Reinar and Alzerina, Reginaldo Athayde, the Fortaleza researcher who introduced us to them, told us about another incident in which a silent explosion occurred.

"On April 3, 1965, about eleven-twenty p.m., two traveling salesmen were driving toward Fortaleza when they saw something in the sky that looked like an infrared lamp. It shined a ray of light on the car. Francisco Muller, director of a laboratory, pointed the object out to the other man, Jose Araujo, but it was off to the side and Jose couldn't see it well.

"The UFO then descended and was right above the car. Muller started to stop the car but the car began to shake and its lights went out. Then they saw a ray of light coming down and Muller realized he had no control over the car. The car skidded sideways and came to a stop.

"The object set down in front of the car. Two entities that looked like robots came out and began moving toward the car. Both men got out. One of them had a rifle and he shot at the two entities. Suddenly there was a terrible

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explosion and the two men were temporarily blinded, but they heard no sound.

"It was ten to fifteen minutes before they could see again and when they could, the object and the two entities were gone. They thought they had killed someone but they couldn't find any indication that anything had been there. The men got back in the car and drove to a gas station, where an attendant told them he had seen the same object at the same time. They went on home to Fortaleza."

More Silent Explosions

In 1991, Cynthia Luce and I heard the story of two more silent explosions when we visited the city of Mossoro in western Rio Grande do Norte. The witness was Antonio Fernandes Duarte, then forty-three, a city councilman, rancher and owner of an auto parts store. He said that in early 1988, he was driving to his thirteen-hundred-acre farm ten miles south of Mossoro.

"It was raining, a light rain," Duarte said. "It was about eight-thirty p.m. When I was entering my property, I saw a big ball of light off to my left about forty meters away. It was an oval-shaped object on the ground with a big light and three legs on it. I stopped and was looking at it. It was a dull, silvery metallic color. It was about the size of a car, maybe four and a half to five meters but round and it stood about three meters high. The legs were about two meters long.

"I could see three very small men the size of dwarfs. One was standing in the door, which was like a window hinged at the top, and two were on the ground. There was an accordion-like cable coming out of their backs. One was wearing an amber-colored jumpsuit, one was orangish and the third was grayish-green. He was in the door of the object.

"They were about one meter twenty centimeters tall, normally proportioned but the heads were largish.[2] The

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distance was so far it was hard to tell but I had the impression they had flattish faces. I couldn't tell what sex they were. I didn't see any hair. It was almost as if they were wearing helmets. It was strange because the skin seemed sort of grayish, like the style of a robot.

"They didn't seem to notice me. They seemed to be distracted. One man was going down on the ground and then he would go back into the ship. He would jump and float to the ground and float back up again. He was connected by a cable. They would go down and do something on the ground and then go back up, but I didn't see any kind of stairs. They seemed to float down and back up. The object made a beeping sound, like an amateur radio.

"I was fascinated by it. I didn't know what to do. I had a revolver and I wanted to shoot it into the air to see their reaction but didn't. I was watching this scene, with my car still running and my window open, when all of a sudden there was a big flash of light. It was like a flash bulb, only a million times more brilliant, and the thing simply disappeared. There was no sound of explosion, nothing, just this huge flash of light, very, very intense and the thing was just gone.

"I was blinded by the flash of light, and for about three minutes I couldn't see a thing. I thought maybe I was dead. But I kept feeling my face and knew I was alive, but it was such an incredible flash of light. My whole body was sort of numb.

"In 1959 when I was a boy, an uncle told my father and me that he had seen the same type of thing at dawn on a road about twenty kilometers from where I saw this. It was an oval UFO on the ground with three legs and three little men in it. It, too, exploded and disappeared, and he heard no sound. After all that time I saw the same thing. I thought to myself that they were still around and were doing research of some kind. They were obviously hunting for something on the ground."

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UFO Splits in Two

The final silent explosion report comes not from Brazil but Puerto Rico, where an unusually high number of sightings and encounters have been reported through the years, particularly since the late 1980s.

One of the most spectacular events took place shortly before eight o'clock in the evening of December 28, 1988, near Laguna Cartagena, a lake east of the small town of Betances in the southwestern part of the island. A number of witnesses told San Juan investigator Jorge Martin that they had seen a huge triangular-shaped UFO passing overhead when two military fighter jets tried to intercept it.

In 1990, Martin introduced me to two of the principal witnesses, Wilson Soza and Carlos Mercado. They said that first one jet seemed to disappear into the huge UFO and then, shortly after, the second also disappeared, with the sound of the jet engines ceasing the moment the jets vanished.

At that point, Soza and Mercado said, the enormous UFO slowly came down low over Laguna Cartagena about a mile away from them and suddenly blew up in a massive but totally silent explosion, with flaming bits of debris appearing to fall to the ground. Then, as the "fireworks" died away, the two men saw the huge UFO, still above the lake, divide into two smaller objects which rapidly streaked away in opposite directions. Soza searched for debris the following day but found nothing.[3]

So, now we're getting into the really gee-whiz aspect of the phenomenon, and more is yet to come. These witnesses reported explosions so massive that several thought they'd been blinded, yet the explosions made no sound. Even the smallest firecracker makes a lot of noise as it blows up, and usually the bigger a detonation, the louder it is. How can these silent explosions be explained? We'll offer some
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speculations in the final chapter.

The firebombing of Reinar and Alzerina was quite unusual and hardly seems to have been an experiment on the part of the ufonauts ("*What will happen if*...”). More likely it was just plain nastiness, like a mean kid tormenting a cat.

The splitting of the huge UFO into two smaller ones in Puerto Rico is truly bizarre, but not uncommon. Throughout the world a small number of witnesses have reported seeing UFOs change shape before their eyes. An object may be triangular to start with, reshape itself into an oval and release a number of smaller objects, and then revert to the triangular shape. Some researchers call this polymorphism.

There's nothing cut and dried about UFOs. These "explosive" incidents are offered to provoke thought about what it is we are dealing with. Most of the time UFOs seem very real, but in the blink of an eye they can become very unreal. Stay tuned.

1. HAY-nar.
2. About four feet.
3. All the military bases in Puerto Rico denied losing any aircraft and say they know nothing about the incident.

Chapter Twenty-Five

A PUSHY PHENOMENON

Silent explosions are just one item on a long list of weird things UFOs seem to be capable of, suggesting that UFOs may not be simply craft made of nuts and bolts from wherever. In addition to creating noiseless blasts that leave no debris, UFOs do "magical" things that defy explanation. For example:

* They seem to appear instantly and disappear even

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faster.

* They have been seen to jump about the sky in quantum leaps, appearing here, then there and again elsewhere, without ever being seen moving from one spot to the next.

* They can sit, massive in size, low in the sky without making a sound.

* They can streak across the horizon in a second or two from a standing start.

* They can change shape, divide into two or three or more objects and just as easily merge back into one.

* They give off colored lights more brilliant and pure than anything any witness has ever seen before.

* They give off light that "performs" in many strange ways that ordinary light does not do.

The list seems endless. The phenomenon is so complex that researchers frequently discover some new capability never reported before.

We've seen how UFOs can pull people upward, but this power also seems to be omnidirectional. They can push people away, pull them sideways, pull them up and then down at the same time, and even pummel them.

Roof Knocked Down

Francisco Oliveira's bar was thumped when a UFO knocked its roof down without touching it as it passed overhead. Just PUNNNGK!...and a shower of shattered roofing tiles and splintered wooden beams came down.

"It was about midnight and I had been shooting pool with a customer named Waldemar," Francisco said as we sat on wooden stools in his small bar on the side of a dusty road in Sitio Dentro, a quiet little community far off the main highways in central Rio Grande do Norte.

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"Waldemar was going to go home but he had to put air in his bicycle tire. I started to lock up and go home, too, but Waldemar asked me to stay a few minutes because flying saucers had been bothering people and he was worried about them.

"We were looking around the sky when all of a sudden a big light suddenly appeared that made everything as bright as daylight. I looked up and saw a huge object coming toward us with two beings in it. They were in a window that looked like a television screen across the front. I could see them from the waist up. They looked almost like dolls because they looked alike."

Francisco and Waldemar were terrified and ran around the corner of the bar toward Francisco's house next door.

"We squatted down next to the wall, trying to hide, and as the UFO passed over the bar we heard a loud noise," Francisco said. "We were so afraid that we ran into the house and didn't come back out until the next morning. My mother and father were there and my mother saw the light and heard the noise."

Early the next morning Francisco and Waldemar went back to the bar and discovered half of the roof had fallen in. The main beam and several rafters had broken, and smashed tiles and debris littered the floor.

This happened late on the night of August 26-27, 1979. There was no wind that night, Francisco said, and the building was not old or dilapidated, having been built just seven years earlier.

Francisco was exposed to the light from the UFO for only a few seconds but he was sick for three days.

"I felt numb all over," he said. "You could pinch my skin and I couldn't feel anything. I had no energy, no appetite. I just slept a lot and didn't walk very much."

In a slightly different manner, a zigzagging UFO caused

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a diesel locomotive to slow down every time it passed overhead. According to Faustino Lima, the assistant engineer, it happened one night in late 1977 as a freight train was going to Crato in southern Ceara.

"It was between ten and eleven o'clock," said Faustino. "The speed of the locomotive started to diminish rather suddenly. It would go fast, then slow, fast then slow. I looked around to see what was causing it. Then I saw a big disk in the sky. It was bluish but had green and yellow in it. It was very bright. It was going very quickly back and forth over the train. Our normal speed was about sixty kilometers an hour, and the locomotive would slow to about fifty-five when the UFO was overhead.

"Two security guards who were on top of the train ran up and hid in the locomotive cab because they were frightened. I was kind of fascinated by it and I went out onto the front platform to watch it. But it affected my eyes and for about a week after I felt them stinging. The UFO suddenly went off across the mountains and disappeared when we approached the town of Missao Velha."

Knocked Off His Feet

Repulsion is also in the UFOs' bag of tricks. Far to the south in the Valley of the Old Women in Minas Gerais, researcher Hulvio Aleixo talked to a man who was knocked more than thirty feet away by a UFO when he apparently became too curious.

"In Ismeraldas, a man named Joao de Jesus was coming home alone on a very dark night and saw a light curving toward him," Hulvio said. "It went out and within seconds he noticed a dark silhouette in front of him six meters away. It was a spherical object with two landing legs.

"To get a better look, he tried to shine his flashlight on it but it wouldn't work. Then he tried to light a match but just as he was about to scratch the match, he was instantly

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pushed backwards about ten meters. He was not hurt. It was fast but not violent.

"I asked him, 'Did you feel any kind of mechanical impact over any part of your body?' He said no. He didn't feel anything except he found himself over there, ten meters away.

"After falling on the ground, he saw nothing more. His eyes were swollen and he couldn't see correctly and had to crawl home. For three days he stayed in his room and kept the door locked. He couldn't stand any kind of light. He couldn't tolerate the faintest light. Even the light that came through cracks bothered him. From that day on he suffered partial blindness."

Pulled Sideways

At least two people have reported being pulled sideways by UFOs. One incident occurred in the city of Belo Horizonte and was also investigated by Hulvio Aleixo.

"This involved a woman named Fatima Maria de Paula," he said. "She was twenty-three. This was May 4, 1981, at ten-thirty-five in the evening. The street was deserted. She had walked with a friend to the friend's house. She descended the stairway to the entrance, which was below the street level. Soon after this they said goodbye to each other. When she reached the street level again, she saw a very bright oval-shaped object, yellowish with a very strong light, in a lot across the street.

"She was astonished when seconds later the object vanished. At this very moment she felt her body being pulled sideways. She felt as if she was becoming lighter and lighter and attracted by the object, but with a great effort she broke free and ran away.

"Later, a burned place was found in the grass, suggesting the object had been there with the lights out

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when the women arrived."

Farm Hand Resists

The other "sideways" case was investigated by Cynthia Luce, and it occurred on a road several miles from her home in Sao Jose do Vale do Rio Preto in the state of Rio De Janeiro. The subject was Ennio Ferreira, a twenty- five-year-old farm worker who was walking home about one o'clock in the morning on a dark night in mid-1981. A light mist was falling.

Ennio doesn't drink but he stopped at a small roadside bar and bought a pack of cigarettes. He continued walking and, about seventy-five yards beyond, he heard a sound like metal striking metal. This was immediately followed by three or four echoes. He'd never heard the noise before and couldn't identify it. It seemed to come from behind a hill he was passing.

He kept walking and, about seventy-five yards farther on, he came to a gate across a small lane intersecting the highway. He glanced to his left and saw a "big, reddish, glowing object about halfway up the hill, shaped like two soup plates." It was six or seven feet off the ground and about forty yards away.

"As soon as he saw it, it seemed to swoop down and come to rest just beyond the wooden gate," Cynthia reported. "Immediately he felt a terrific pull on him, as if the object were a magnet, and he was being pulled towards it. Ennio was terrified and wanted to flee but it took a tremendous effort for him to turn and run back to the bar."

When he reached the bar, he was in such a state of shock that the bar owner and her husband had to take him home in their car. They passed the spot where Ennio had seen the UFO but they saw nothing.

The 'Vacuum Cleaner'

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There are also at least two cases in which UFOs acted like vacuum cleaners of sorts. The first occurred about three o'clock one afternoon in 1976 in Baldim on the bank of a river when two sisters, sixteen and seventeen, saw an object at low altitude making a loud noise.

Hulvio Aleixo interviewed them. "They were frightened," he said. "It came within about thirty meters and was yawing or rocking. It stopped over a bamboo grove by the river and the bamboo trees began to sway. From the top something like a ribbon was fluttering. There were three protuberances and a little blue thing was spinning around the object.

"On the bottom was a hole and it was sucking in sand, leaves and dust, everything loose, like a vacuum cleaner. This hole on the bottom was too small for people. A human body wouldn't have fit in it. It didn't come close enough for the girls to feel the affects of this."

Taking on Water

The other vacuum case took place over the Atlantic Ocean around six-thirty at night on July 17, 1992. Three shrimp fishermen in a boat were about two miles out to sea off the coast near Iguape, forty-five miles southeast of Fortaleza in Ceara. It was dark and the men saw a bright light approaching them on the horizon.

"It was so low they thought it was a ship that was going to collide with them," said investigator Reginaldo Athayde, citing a report submitted by Colonel Liberato Andrade, who interviewed the fishermen.[1]

"They pulled their sail down to slow their boat to avoid a collision, but when the ship approached their boat they realized it wasn't a ship. It was a UFO with a lot of lights on it. It was sucking water up into it and passed slowly within twenty meters of the boat, but the fishermen don't think the UFO saw them. It just went by them about six meters above the water, sucking up a column of water almost as wide as

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the UFO. The water didn't fall back into the ocean. The UFO went past them and disappeared in the distance."

Colonel Andrade may have seen the UFO himself. He reported that the same evening he and three other people saw a lighted object pass through the sky just off the coast near Andrade's house on the Iguape beach.

Buzzed by UFO

The final item in this category involved two other men who were fishing about seven o'clock in the evening on April 20, 1986. They were in a boat on a reservoir near Pacajus, a small city just south of Fortaleza.

The men said a gray object about the size of a car, giving off a yellowish light, swooped down toward their boat and rushed by so fast it left the boat rocking. The UFO made no noise. It quickly climbed back into the sky and disappeared.

So, more puzzles: Strange craft that suck up dirt, leaves, water and people; pull them sideways or push them away; slow down trains, knock down roofs and buzz a boat, nearly swamping it.

What would Sherlock Holmes deduce from all this? Although his creator was fascinated by the occult, the ever practical Holmes probably would have said: "It definitely isn't elementary, Watson. None of this conforms to the laws of the universe." And perhaps as an afterthought: "At least, as we know them."

It would be even more interesting to know what Albert Einstein would think, if he were alive today and someone persuaded him to take a serious look at UFO phenomena.

Anyone who believes UFOs are secret weapons of the United States government, or any other government, should have realized by now how wrong they are. No nation has any weapons capable of doing any of the things that UFOs can

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do. If any country did, it would rule the world.

1. Andrade, a military police official and a professor, is a member of the Center for Ufological Research, the Fortaleza UFO group that Athayde heads.

Chapter Twenty-Six

FALLING FISH NETS

One of the most curious aspects of the phenomena — and least understandable — is that sometimes UFOs look like a fishing net when they come down toward people.

The first time I heard this description was in 1980, when a Natal investigator told me about several cases in Rio Grande do Norte where people said they'd seen nets falling toward them. At that time, however, I was never able to talk to anyone involved.

Those reports came about the time the old man, Antonio, told me about being dangled under a UFO by a hook in the back of his shirt, and the year after I talked to Januncio, who was dragged up a tree trunk by a UFO. Those two cases had convinced me that the so-called intelligence behind UFOs could on occasion be quite crude. Hearing about the fish nets only strengthened that belief.

Because of the technological unsophistication of those two cases, I had the impression that in "fish net" encounters the UFO crews were dropping nets over men much as animal dealers do when trying to capture wild animals. That turned out to be a totally false interpretation, but it was a dozen years before I realized it.

It wasn't until 1991 that I talked to a man who said he saw a fish net coming down. That was Alfredo Soares, who was crippled for six months after a UFO zapped him in the leg with a beam of light in 1977.

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"I saw a big beam of light trying to hit me, like a fishing net," said Alfredo, who felt himself being pulled toward the UFO but clung to a fence until it went away. "It was a white light like a big fish net."

By the time I heard his story I had forgotten about the fish net cases I'd heard of years earlier, and its significance in Alfredo's case escaped me until weeks later when I was back home transcribing the interview. By then I'd missed the chance to get a better understanding of the fish net image.

Beato's Case

By coincidence, only five days after interviewing Alfredo, I talked to another man who saw what looked like a fish net coming down. That was Beato, the farmer who hugged a bush to keep from being pulled up into a UFO in 1979.

"It was seven or eight at night," Beato said. "I was walking along and a UFO came down...It looked like a fishing net and it wanted to suck me up...When the object saw it couldn't suck me up, it threw hot oil on me...and then disappeared."

But again I slipped up. The fact that Beato had an experience almost identical to Januncio's seemed so extraordinary that I again overlooked the fish net angle and failed to question Beato about it.

Since then I've talked to three other people who've described UFOs as looking like a fish net, and I have questioned them at length. However, I haven't learned a great deal more, other than that no nets as such were dropped or thrown at them.

One witness was Iran Cosme, a man involved in the very first such case I'd heard about. Iran had an encounter in August, 1979, but it wasn't until July, 1993, that I was able to interview him.

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Iran and two others were hunting armadillos in the mountains southeast of Lajes, about eighty miles north of where Beato had his experience. With Iran, then thirty-three, were Joao Batista, eighteen, and Joao's brother, Jose, twelve. I interviewed Joao in 1980 but it wasn't until I talked to Iran Cosme that the fish net was mentioned. I had located Iran in 1980 but at that time he wouldn't talk about the incident.

Light Behind the Net

I found him again in July, 1993, working on his farm near Lajes. This time he was quite willing to discuss what happened the night he and the two brothers were hunting on a mountain in the vicinity of the Bom Fim mines.

"We were under a tree when a ball of fire appeared and started coming toward us," Iran said. "Then there were two balls, one higher than the other. They moved separately. We ran and the lights were chasing us. Something like a net appeared near one light. I could see through it and the light was behind the net."

He thought the net was part of the UFO. It never changed shape as it moved. Iran and the two brothers ran about five hundred yards down the mountain to reach the safety of a relative's home.

"When we reached the house, the light was over the house and was going around," Iran said. They stayed inside the house until dawn.

When I interviewed Joao in 1980, he said everyone in the house watched the two UFOs for two hours before they went away.

"There was a big reddish-orange one the size of a basketball down low and a smaller blue one way up above it," Joao said. "The one on top would move up and down every once in a while but the big one stayed in the same place all

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the time. I've never gone hunting at night since then. I've never been so afraid in my life."

Iran made a sketch of what he saw, but instead of a round net he drew a long vertical loop, as if it hung from the bottom of the UFO. Language problems kept us from getting a clearer understanding of what he saw. The interpreter's knowledge of English was somewhat limited but my Portuguese was far worse.

In September, 1992, I heard a much more detailed description of the fish net aspect. This came when Cynthia Luce and I interviewed Maria Dos Dores Lopes, who was pulled into the air with her daughter and dog. They and another daughter had taken the dog out for a walk, and their attention was drawn to a light in the sky, which moved toward them very quickly.

"Suddenly something came down like a fish net," Maria said. Her younger daughter fled into the house but Maria, the other daughter and the dog were quickly pulled several feet off the ground as a cold wind swirled around them. The incident ended quickly when the UFO flew away and they fell to the ground.

Like a Camera Shutter

I talked to Maria in 1992 and again in 1993, and it was during the first interview that we discussed the fish net angle. Alberto Da Silva, a police detective who had taken us to her house, sat in on the first interview. He'd also seen UFOs and knew what she was talking about.

"I saw a net, a *tarrafa*,[1] and she saw it, too," Alberto said. "There are lines all through it. It's spinning and then it closes. It opens and shuts, like a camera shutter. And it goes around, opening and shutting. It rotates and looks like it opens and shuts. I think it comes down like this spinning net, it comes over a person and if you don't get out from underneath that, it closes and picks you up.
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"I've seen it change shape. It gets tiny and disappears. It pulls together, shrinks. It gets down to a small size and then it goes out. If you don't get away, you get pulled up in it. But everybody runs underneath a tree to get away from it."

Alberto, thirty-three, a police officer for twelve years, said hunters in the Bom Jesus area southwest of Natal have also seen UFOs and fish nets.

"The hunters say that around two o'clock in the morning they see things in the sky," he said. "They go hunting armadillos. It's dangerous to hunt at night here because they come and get you, these flying saucers, even now. They come down and they start going around. The flying saucer comes down and creates a wind for the hunters. It gets to you really fast, comes zeroing in on you really fast. What Maria saw was white. What I saw had a lot of colors in it.

"The hunters see a small light sometimes and in seconds they open up and get very big, change shape. The hunters are always on the lookout and when they sense that there's one around, they run. They turn off their flashlights, find a big tree and get under it."

He said his most recent sighting of a UFO was on a July night two months before the interview. "It was a holiday," he said. "That's why I remember it. I was hunting. They all had lights of different colors and made rapid humming sounds. The light is so intense that you can't see anything else. It almost blinds you."

A Brazilian Air Force base is located at the Natal Airport about twenty-five miles east of Bom Jesus. Sometimes when UFOs are seen in the area, Alberto said, air force jets soon come zooming over as if searching for the UFOs or trying to intercept them.

At the airport two days later, Cynthia and I saw an air

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force colonel waiting for a flight and we asked him about this. He emphatically denied that planes were ever sent up after UFOs and said, in effect, that there are no such things as UFOs.

Earlier in the year I had written to Fortaleza investigator Jean Alencar and asked him to question Alfredo Soares about the fish net he'd seen. After Cynthia and I were ending our discussion of fish nets with Maria and Alberto, I pulled out a sketch that Jean had sent me. It looked very much like a camera shutter. When I showed it to Maria and Alberto, both exclaimed: "That's IT!"

Unfortunately, we still don't know what "it" is. But at least three witnesses tend to agree on the details of the fish net aspect.

1. This is a circular net that fishermen use.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

WINDOW IN THE SKY

Of all the strange elements associated with UFOs, one of the most bizarre factors is a "window" that simply appears in the night sky and then vanishes a short time later.

I've heard of this only twice, once from a hunter in Texas and the other time from a truck driver in Brazil. The Texan said he had camped out for the night in the 1970s and, before going to sleep, saw two "windows" that simply materialized low in the sky near his tent. After a while, they disappeared as quietly as they had come, and nothing happened to him.

The Brazilian is Jose Garinberto Dantes, better known by the nickname Bebeto. He lives in Acari, Rio Grande do Norte, where he drives a water tank truck for the

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municipality, delivering water to the more drought-stricken areas within twenty miles of the city itself.

The sun sets in this region around six o'clock most evenings and Bebeto's working days end long after dark. Since 1990, he said, he and his helpers have seen at least thirty strange lights of different sizes and colors moving about in the sky, sometimes in an erratic manner. Several times he and the men with him had dramatic close encounters.

In one, he and two helpers saw two balls of red light and a yellowish "TV window" in the night sky. I've interviewed Bebeto twice, in September, 1992, and again in July, 1993. In the first interview, my tape recorder began sticking when he was talking about the window, and my notes didn't cover all the details. In 1993 he explained it to me again.

"We were coming back from a farm, empty, one night in February, 1991, and we were near the river on the east side of Acari," Bebeto, thirty-seven, said. "Me and two workers. When we stopped to get water, we saw something like the flashing red light on top of police cars. It was about forty centimeters wide and three hundred meters away. Then it stopped revolving and another light came out of it.

Light Jumps Up and Down

"The second light was also red. It was the same shape and size. It went toward the river and then came back toward the first one. When the second light got back to the first one, the first one began to revolve again. The second one stopped beside the first one. Then the second light turned off. As it did, a 'window' appeared near it. It was about one meter high and twenty centimeters wide.

"The 'window' was open about two or three minutes. It was yellow. The red light was beside the window. It was revolving. Two or three minutes later it stopped revolving
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and the window disappeared at the same time.

"When the window closed, another red light came out of the first and went to the river. It was jumping up and down like a kangaroo. When it reached the river, it stayed for several seconds and then it went back, jumping up and down again. When it arrived back where the first one was, it turned off.

"The first red ball was still there. Then it began moving toward us, jumping up and down three times, and suddenly everything turned off. We never saw anything more. And at the same time the dogs in the neighborhood began barking. They hadn't been barking before.

"This was about seven-thirty at night. The ball was a very bright red. The window was a dim yellow, like a dead light. We didn't hear anything."

Bebeto admitted that at times he and his helpers have been frightened by the UFOs, and one man quit his job. One of the other incidents had an odd ending somewhat similar to the window incident, he said.

UFO Paces Truck

It started about seven-thirty p.m. on December 4, 1990. Bebeto and his helpers were driving back to Acari on a dirt road after delivering water to a farm eight miles southwest of town.

"About fifty meters from the truck we thought we saw a fire in the brush, so we stopped," Bebeto said. "It was a big three-meter ball which looked like fire from a distance, but it wasn't a fire. It was reddish-orange. Then the thing got smaller to about half its size and began to pulsate.

"It didn't make any sound. The radio was on but there was no interference. We watched this light for ten minutes. Then I got kind of nervous and we got in the truck and started driving. The man sitting next to the passenger door

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was watching the light. It was on his side of the truck. We went about thirty meters and he got scared and said: 'It's going up! It's going up!'

"We looked at it and it was spinning at a great speed, but going up slowly. I got scared and started going faster. Then it began to zig-zag. It went to the right and to the left again and when we came around a curve it was three hundred meters in front of us. It was an oval-shape, like a squashed sphere-shape, and a little more than a meter wide. It was like a dead yellow, like it had lost its color. It was about three or four meters above the bushes."

The object kept pace with the truck for about two miles, following the contour of the ground, going up and down just above the height of the bushes. When Bebeto and his helpers got close to Acari, the object shot away at great speed.

"We stopped and climbed up on top of the tank," Bebeto said. "We could see it just over some mountains about ten kilometers away. It had covered that distance in just seconds. We watched it for twenty minutes."

Suddenly the object came back to within about two miles of them with "a big blast of light," Bebeto said, adding:

"Then two smaller, spirally white objects came out of it and went straight up from it about a hundred meters. Then everything turned off. We never saw anything more. The next day we went back to where we first saw the object over the bushes and tried to locate the spot where it had hit the ground but we didn't find anything."

Bebeto said he and his helpers still occasionally see strange blue, yellow or red lights in the countryside.

So, now we add two more strange elements to the UFOs' repertoire, windows in the sky and spirally objects climbing into the sky. Recapping, thus far we've seen how UFOs disappear in highly visible but silent explosions, how they move people forward, backward, up or down with an

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invisible force, and how they create not only the appearance of nets coming down over helpless victims but also of "windows" suddenly opening in the sky. None of these things have any apparent explanation.

Just as UFOs violate the laws of physics as we know them, so does light that is emitted by UFOs. Light coming from UFOs behaves in incredibly strange ways, ways that light as we know it definitely does not. We look at some of the wilder examples in the next chapter.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

SEEING THE LIGHT

Earlier, a farmer named Marciano told how a strong light from UFO on a mountain two and a half miles away chilled him and seven other people and made them sick. At the same time, it lit up the valley as bright as daylight. A scientist could estimate how much candlepower would be needed to light an area that big, but it's doubtful any manmade light could illuminate an area that large with such intensity or make people sick.

As has been shown, UFOs seem to operate under a set of physical laws all their own. Huge objects can hover silently above the treetops and disappear across the horizon in an instant. Some make right-angle turns while streaking across the sky at high speeds. Planes can't do that nor can human bodies withstand the pressures created by such sharp fast turns. Perhaps the laws of physics as we know them are not the sum total of the laws of the universe.

If so, these yet unknown laws may explain the curious properties of light emitted by UFOs. As described by a number of witnesses, they provide a fascinating illustration of the complexity of this phenomenon.

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In Chapter Twenty, people told how beams of light from UFOs penetrated roofs of houses in Colares at the mouth of the Amazon river. Most homes in the region don't have ceilings, only the rafters and tiles that form the roofs. The roofs are constructed in such a way that light and air can penetrate while rain is kept out.

When I first heard about the Colares cases, I envisioned the beams of light actually going straight through the tiles and being seen inside as a solid beam. Since then I've been inside many such homes and have seen light coming through numerous chinks between the tiles. This led me to change my mind about the solid light beams and conclude that the light was coming through the small openings and thus was diffused, much as sunlight is. However, on my third visit to Colares, in July, 1993, investigator Daniel Rebisso said both assumptions were correct.

Lights Penetrate Solid Tiles

Daniel, a biologist who sees the UFO phenomenon as a scientific challenge, has done extensive UFO research in a large area of northern Brazil. In a number of cases, he said, people had told him they'd seen the lights actually come through the roofs as solid beams of light and move around inside. Tiles are solid objects about an inch thick and made of fired clay. Laser beams can penetrate steel but only by burning holes in the steel. None of the roofs in Colares were burned by the lights from UFOs.

Penetrating solid objects without leaving holes is not the only strange capability of light coming from UFOs. Here are some other peculiar examples, not all from Brazil:

Case One: Late one Saturday night in January, 1980, a Brazilian electronics businessman and nine other people saw a disc-shaped object shine a light down on the water near the eastern shore of the Tapajos river in the Amazon. The

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man, his family and some relatives, were camping at a beach thirty miles south of Santarem, and the UFO appeared around eleven o'clock.

Several teenagers were still awake, lying in hammocks and talking, when they saw the UFO come toward them from across the river. It stopped about thirty yards from the beach and shined a light down on the water twenty yards below. The kids awakened the others. The UFO hovered briefly and then began moving north, or to the campers' right, parallel to the shore. It traveled more than half a mile, with the spotlight still shining straight down, before it disappeared.

The curious thing about all this was that as the beam of light moved along the river, it left behind a trail of luminescence on the surface for several hundred yards. The trail gradually faded out, south to north, at about the same speed as the light itself had moved.

Case Two: A somewhat similar report was given to me by an Indianapolis computer expert who had served in the U.S. Air Force. He had been a sergeant in charge of a fire truck crash crew at an air base on the west coast of South Korea overlooking the China Sea. Late one night in 1958, two American jet fighters flying in from Japan to another base in Korea requested permission to make an emergency landing because one of the planes was low on fuel. As is normal in such emergencies, the fire truck and its crash crew were positioned near the runway in case the plane ran into difficulty.

As the men waited for the planes to arrive, they saw a bright light approaching from across the China Sea. The light grew bigger and bigger and, when it got within several hundred yards of the shore, it stopped and hovered a few hundred feet above the water. The sergeant radioed the control tower and asked what it was. The controllers didn't know. They were examining the light through binoculars, but couldn't determine anything.

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Suddenly, the object shined a beam of light straight down on the water. A short time later the light went off, but the water remained luminescent for a while before fading out. The object again shined a light down on the water, and turned it off again a minute or so later. Once again, the water remained luminescent for several minutes.

By this time the jet fighter that was low on fuel was landing, and the control tower asked the pilot of the second plane to check out the light, which was still sitting in the same spot. The pilot of the second jet circled around and as he approached the object, it instantly shot back toward China and disappeared in seconds.

Case Three: In the spring of 1975, a half dozen young people were partying one night near Carmen in southern Manitoba, Canada, when they saw an orange-colored object above one end of a reservoir. It changed shape several times, usually returning to a halfmoon shape. During one of these half-moon moments, the object shined a beam of light down on the water at an angle of thirty to forty degrees.

The odd thing was that this beam of light was "hyphenated," or apparently traveling in bursts or pulses. Once the light hit the water, it spread out on the surface and moved toward the shore, still broken up in patches.

Case Four: Three women driving along a rural highway in Kentucky one night in January, 1976, saw a brightly lit oval object flash down out of the sky and stop above the highway ahead of them. It rocked gently for a few seconds and then circled around behind them. In the next instant, their car was roughly drawn backward. As they struggled to control the car, they saw what appeared to be a long white road ahead of them, something that doesn't exist in that hilly country.

In what seemed to them to be only minute or two later, they found themselves driving on the regular highway again,

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approaching another town that normally would have taken them ten minutes to reach. None of the three women could understand how they got there so fast. When they finally arrived home, it was an hour and a half later than they thought it was. UFO researchers call this missing time.

For six months, the women were still unable to explain how they lost that time. Then, under hypnosis, in separate sessions with none of them being told what the others had said under hypnosis, each relived the experience of that night. Each told of being taken aboard a UFO, with their car being drawn up into the UFO on a long white beam of light.

Case Five: Late one evening in March, 1977, a young couple driving a truck encountered a huge object above a highway in southwestern Missouri. The object suddenly came down over the truck and lit up the sky. The strange part of this was that the light seemed to flow out of the UFO and visibly expand like a billowing cloud until the whole area gradually filled with light, sort of like cream spreading as it is poured into a cup of coffee.

Case Six: One night in March, 1981, two hunters near the small Amazon town of Monte Alegre said a UFO came down and shined a beam of light at them. One man was "imprisoned" inside the cone of light. He tried to break out but it was as if the outer limits of the cone of light were an impenetrable wall. This continued until the other hunter fired two rifle shots at the UFO, at which time the UFO turned its light off and went away.

Another hunter in a similar incident a week later wasn't as fortunate. When he raised his gun to shoot at a UFO above him, he was struck by a ray of light and knocked unconscious.

Case Seven: In September, 1976, a mechanic in Colusa, California, was watching TV late one night when the reception started going bad. Soon, both the TV and the air

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conditioner stopped working. Thinking a transformer had blown, he stepped outside to check it. As he did, he felt all the hairs on his body stand up.

Looking up, he saw a large, circular UFO hovering silently above his barn — and a cone-shaped beam of light coming down from the object. The odd thing is that halfway to the ground, the cone of light just stopped in mid-air, cut off flat.

Case Eight: In the Amazon village of Curuai, a store clerk said an object about as big as a car and shaped like a toy top came down from the sky and hovered just above a landing strip one night in 1979. It shined a light down to the ground. What was unusual is that the beam of light was straight and narrow, like a pipe, but halfway to the ground the beam flared out like a beam from a flashlight.

And in a case to be described later, a military officer who investigated a series of sightings for the Brazilian Air Force said one victim told of seeing a small humanoid creature leave a UFO and come down a beam of light toward the tree where he was hiding and later go back up to the UFO on the same red beam.

How is any of this possible? Perhaps it isn't light as we know it. Perhaps it is some other form of energy that we have yet to discover. In other cases, people have been zapped by a flash of light from a UFO, others have been sucked up by a light, some have been made sick by light and still others have been burned by lights from UFOs.

These are unusual properties of light. With all the other strange abilities of UFOs illustrated in previous chapters — the silent explosions, the physical manipulation of people and animals, the casting of "nets" over victims, creating "windows" in the sky, changing shapes and dividing into two or more objects, appearing and disappearing in an instant — they clearly show that this is a truly bizarre phenomenon.

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PART SEVEN

ONE PHENOMENON OR MANY?

Chapter Twenty-Nine

SHAPES AND OCCUPANTS

"It just disappeared bit by bit by bit, and I was all alone. That's what was so bad about it. Nobody believed me. My husband said I was crazy."

Weeks later as Jackie talked about the "McBurger Case," she was able to laugh about it. But the night she saw the UFO, it wasn't funny. The incident lasted only a short time. It happened as she was driving home about nine o'clock one night and something startled her.

"I happened to look up and just above the trees on the left side of the street half a block ahead was an oblong object glowing blue with orange flame color at the back end," said Jackie, a soft-spoken woman in her thirties whose husband was a police lieutenant.

She stopped her car in the middle of the street, dumbfounded.

"It was just clearing the treetops and crossing the street to my right. I couldn't tell how big it was. There's a house on the left and a church on the right, and when it got over the church it began disappearing. You've seen these TV commercials where bites are taken out of a hamburger with trick photography? That's the way this looked, with bits of it disappearing from right to left. I wondered how it could do that. It was frightening at first, fascinating but scary."

In ten seconds it had disappeared completely. She quickly looked around, hoping someone else had also seen it, but she was alone.

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This was one of the strange tales I picked up while checking out reports of UFO sightings in Alabama early in 1976, and it helps illustrate not only the bizarreness of the phenomenon but also the difficulty in pinning down exactly what these things look like.

The terms "flying saucers" and "UFOs" are generic or catch-all descriptions. When most people think of UFOs, they visualize disc-shaped objects, but a disc is just one of an uncountable number of shapes. The same goes for sizes and occupants.

Many photographs and videotapes have been taken of UFOs, but often the images are small and fuzzy and tell us very little. Photos exist of alleged occupants of UFOs and alien bodies, but many if not all are suspect. It is virtually impossible to prove such photos are authentic.

Round and Squashed

For the most part, our knowledge of the shapes and sizes of UFOs and their occupants is based on the descriptions given by people who've had close encounters, such as Jackie in Alabama. She saw "an oblong object glowing blue." It's likely that each of us would have a different interpretation of exactly what she saw.

Too often people cannot describe clearly what they see. "It was round and sort of squashed," one might say, telling us very little, and too often the investigator has his or her own ideas as to what this means.

In central Brazil, Hulvio Aleixo has used a unique technique in his investigations of some three hundred cases in the Valley of the Old Women. He carries Play-Doh of different colors as part of his investigative tools. During the initial interview, he asks the witness to use the Play-Doh to make a model of the UFO he or she has seen.[1]

From these usually crude models, Hulvio and members

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of his UFO organization have made more precise models, all of which are kept on display in glass vials in the group's headquarters in Belo Horizonte. There are more than a hundred different shapes and sizes, attesting to the great variety of UFOs that people have seen in just one area of the world alone, the Valley of the Old Women.

"The diversity of the forms is so immense that it confuses us," Hulvio said as we examined some of the models in 1992. Part of that diversity, as Cynthia Luce pointed out, may be explained by the fact that people often see things from different angles and don't always see the object from all sides.

For instance, Hermelindo — who was yanked up toward a UFO by a hook around his ankle after fighting with a little creature -- saw the object as being round. However, his brother-in-law saw it differently. Awakened by Hermelindo's screams for help, he watched most of the incident from the house some distance away — and to him the UFO was conical or bell-shaped.

Even among investigators there can be wide differences in perceptions of shapes. In my investigations, I became convinced that the most commonly seen UFO in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s was a triangular or boomerang-shaped object, usually very large. Triangular UFOs have been seen in many other countries, particularly in Europe, yet they're seldom reported in Brazil.

Hulvio Aleixo says he's never had any reports of triangular cases in the Valley of the Old Women. Yet there have been many bell-shaped objects and some cone-shaped ones. As we discussed all these shapes, we realized we could be talking about much the same thing.

One of the most common descriptions of UFOs in Brazil is *o fogo*, or a ball of fire. It's usually a round, reddish-orange object of varying size, depending on how close it is. In

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Pinheiro, where this type of object was seen almost every night for four months, the fireball would come down within a thousand feet of town and hover. It was close enough at times that witnesses could see colors swirling around on its surface, much like molten steel.[2]

UFO Rises Out of River

It's possible that the fireball and the disc-shaped objects are one and the same thing. In my one venture into the Amazon, in July, 1981, I met Noemi Rodrigues, twenty-eight, who had seen a UFO in both forms. A tall, dark-haired woman, she taught first and second-grade pupils in Santarem. She had seen a UFO on two occasions, both just several weeks before I talked to her.

Her first sighting was on June 20 and the second on July 1. Both occurred when she was a passenger on an overnight boat from Alenquer to Santarem, a trip of about eight hours.

"The first time was about two o'clock in the morning," Noemi said. "Everybody else was sleeping in hammocks on the deck but I couldn't sleep because the rocking of the boat bothered me. I was standing at the back of the boat when I noticed a big ball of light about a thousand meters behind the boat, zigzagging from one side of the river to the other. It didn't come close to the boat. Then it disappeared. I didn't say anything about it to anybody. I asked the pilot if another boat was behind us but he said there wasn't.

"The second time, I saw the UFO come out of the river. I was standing by myself at the back of the boat again, between midnight and one o'clock. When the saucer left the water, it was not very bright, so I could see the shape. I could see water dripping off it, draining, and it was disc or saucer-shaped, like a plate.

"It was about a thousand meters behind the boat and it rose up maybe six meters. It was big, maybe a meter and a

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half wide or more. Then it got very bright and looked like a ball of fire. It began zigzagging back and forth like the other one did. It was going so fast it made me sick. I was very frightened, too frightened to say anything to anyone. Then it disappeared. It dimmed out to nothing."

Thus, the dull-red disc-shaped object flared into a brilliant light that looked like a ball of fire. Is it possible that the ball of fire that most people see conceals within its fiery aura a disc-shaped craft? Maybe.

Future Scientist Sees UFO

A somewhat similar experience -- seeing a disc turn into a fireball, but in reverse order — was reported by Charles E. Kohlhase, who was mission design manager for the Voyager space mission at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology.

One night in August, 1956, before he became a scientist and was still in college at Georgia Tech, he and his father went out into a field near their home in the vicinity of Americus, Georgia, to see how well young Kohlhase, then in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps, could locate stars.

After about fifteen minutes of stargazing, they spotted a light over the far end of the field moving parallel to the horizon. It blinked on about every ten seconds for a duration of two or three seconds. The light appeared to be going back and forth, left to right, above the trees, about the width of the field.

They thought little of it at the time and decided to return to the house. Looking back at the light, though, they realized it wasn't moving back and forth anymore. Instead, it was moving slowly toward them, pulsing on and off.

"It kept coming and finally stopped at a place that was about a forty-five-degree angle of elevation to us," said Kohlhase. "It emitted no sound and no exhaust. Then the

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first thing happened that really scared us. This thing turned a brilliant white hot. I shouldn't say hot because I didn't feel any heat from it, but it was extremely bright.

"I crouched down covering my face with my arms in anticipation of a possible explosion. I was convinced that whatever this -- whatever it was, maybe an airplane — was about to blow up in a trillion pieces. But nothing happened. There was no noise. This brilliant whiteness began to dull, to tone down to about a blacksmith's horseshoe red, like when you pull a piece of iron out of the fire. For the first time, I could see its outline. It appeared to be a saucer-shaped object thirty to fifty feet in diameter that was fifty to a hundred yards away.

"Then it began to move slowly back in the other direction. When it got fairly far away, it looked more spherical than it did saucer-shaped. The object continued moving until it got back over the tops of the distant pine trees. Then two other lights somewhere in the distance rose up from the other side of the trees. The three objects then moved off to the southwest and disappeared in a minute or so."

Airmen See Ball-Disc

Kohlhase first revealed this to his scientific colleagues at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 1968 and told them: "Being of a scientific discipline, I do not believe in 'flying saucers.' And, yet, what I saw did look like a large 'flying saucer' of a diameter of thirty to fifty feet and a thickness of five to fifteen feet. It is my opinion that the object was solid, that it contained an energy source that was the cause of the object's luminosity, and that it was under control. I will always remember and be impressed by this UFO sighting."

When Noemi Rodrigues saw the object rise out of the Amazon river, it was disc-shaped and glowing dull red. Then it turned brilliant and looked like a ball of fire. Kohlhase saw

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a brilliant white object tone down to a dull red, and then he could make out its outline. It was disc shaped.

Some Brazilian Air Force personnel also have seen a ball of light that turned out to actually be a disc-shaped object. It happened late one night in 1977 during the long UFO flap at the mouth of the Amazon, which a captain and some sergeants were investigating. They were on the river when a ball of light as bright as the sun passed over them and stopped on the other side of the river. It then turned its light off, and they saw a disc-shaped object twice as large as a Boeing 737 airliner with many white windows.[3]

One of the few people who have seen the fireball up fairly close is Francisca Oliveira, a housewife in her sixties who lives in Sao Goncalo do Amarante, Ceara. Late one Saturday night in January, 1990, she was walking home after visiting her son. She was in the middle of the street a few steps from her home when a flash of light lit up the sky.

"I thought it was lightning," she said. "Then it happened again, and a second later a third time. I looked up and saw a huge ball of light the color of fire. I saw something large and round, kind of mushroom-shaped and with a kind of tube or thin stem coming down. It was higher than the light pole. It had a light focused on me."

Francisca screamed and dashed inside her house. "I was sure the thing was going to get me," she said. "I tried to wake my husband but when I looked out again it was gone."

Matter of Terminology?

The cigar-shaped object is another description heard from time to time in the United States and other countries but seldom in Brazil. Again, though, this may simply be a matter of terminology. "Refrigerator" and "silo" shapes — meaning long and cylindrical — are reported in Brazil, and several Brazilian investigators have suggested we're probably talking about the same general shape.

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The sizes of UFOs vary greatly throughout the world. In the United States, some triangular objects have been reported to be as big as football stadiums. At the other end of the scale, a Tennessee woman once told me that in the spring of 1974, she and her husband saw five disc-shaped objects no more than two feet in diameter slowly fly in and land among a herd of cows in a field across the road from her house. One cow took offense and kept running at one disc, which rose up and crossed over the cow several times before it flew away with the other discs.

In Brazil, most objects are neither very small nor enormous, nowhere near as large as a stadium. They generally range in apparent size from five to thirty yards across. Not all of them are disc-shaped or like fireballs. For example:

Case One: In Apodi, Jorge Fernandes saw a square object. Jorge is the man who had to hold onto the grass to keep from being pulled into the air by a tornado-like wind. He believes the wind was generated by a UFO which suddenly appeared about forty yards above him as the wind blew. He said the UFO was square, four to five yards across and had a round, blue-white light about two yards in diameter in the center of it.

Case Two: In 1977, electrician Jose Antonio De Oliveiria and three other people saw a rectangular object pass slowly overhead on the outskirts of Santa Cruz. It was lit up with red, green and yellow lights that alternately blinked on and off. It was the size of a big truck and, as it passed slowly overhead, a sound like running water, as in a shower, was heard.

Case Three: In Quixeramobim one afternoon in 1982, businessman Jorge Simao and a dozen other people saw a strange object pass through the sky.[4] Simao said the object moved slowly and was composed of one long cylinder or tube

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and two shorter ones centered above and below it.[5] From the back end of the larger tube came something like smoke or steam. It was about two hundred yards high and took seven minutes to pass out of sight. It made no sound.

Case Four: In 1988, Marconi Cabral, a state agriculture official in Rio Grande do Norte, was spending the weekend with his family at their farm northeast of Santana Do Matos. Shortly after dark one evening, he and his seventeen-year-old son, his sister-in-law and a farm worker saw a ball of light pass over a mountain several hundred yards away.

"It was yellow with a bluish tinge around it, had a vivid red light in front and had a tail like a comet," he said. "It was smaller than a volley ball and was going east following the ridge toward Natal."

Before they had time to recover from their surprise, another object identical in size and colors went rapidly over the same path. Then every half minute or so for about ten minutes another would pass, and another. Cabral said they didn't count them but estimated they saw fifteen to twenty such balls of light. All disappeared toward the east and none were seen going in any other direction.

The Occupants

The crews of UFOs come in different sizes and shapes, too, but the variety doesn't seem to be as great as the UFOs themselves.

Luis Carlos Serra, the teenager who vanished for four days near Penalva in 1978, saw three beings less than three feet tall. They wore uniforms like spacesuits with visors that covered their faces, and spoke a language he didn't understand.

Both Januncio and his son, Beato, reported seeing ordinary-looking humans. Januncio saw a man and a woman sitting inside a UFO but motionless, as if they were robots.

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Beato saw two men and a woman, and one of the men looked down at him with what he interpreted as a shrug of scorn or contempt.

Antonio Duarte, the Mossoro councilman who saw a UFO disappear in a silent explosion, saw three beings about four feet tall. They were dressed in what looked like jumpsuits, one amber, one orange and the third gray-green. They were normally proportioned but had large heads and flattish faces. Their skin looked grayish.

Joana Rodrigues Ferreira, who lost her baby after an encounter in Ceara in 1988, and her ten-year-old daughter saw two small beings in silvery suits. They seemed to just appear at the base of a tree ten feet away while a brightly lit UFO hovered over the tree. Joana couldn't see their faces because the light was so bright but could hear them making a tick-tick-ticking sound.

Antonio Amador De Lima, the old man who was yanked into the air with a hook in the back of his shirt, saw two "kind of ugly" women with yellow arms and a man with a beard in the UFO. Otherwise, they looked like humans although not Brazilian. The UFO itself was cigar-shaped, twice as big as a car, brown, and had a red light in the back.

Hermelindo fought with a creature smaller than him and lost. It was gray, about four feet tall and had slid down a cable that dangled from a UFO. It was covered with material that felt to Hermelindo like metal.

Here is what others have reported seeing, in chronological order:

Case One: Faustino, the assistant engineer on the diesel freight train that was slowed by a zigzagging UFO, had an earlier experience around 1950 as a teenager. He had accompanied a man and his son into the mountains near Maranguape to get bananas.

On their return at mid-day, Faustino was walking some

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distance ahead of the other man and his son when he came upon a UFO sitting on the ground. Nearby were a man and a woman, both about six feet tall and skinny. They were "ugly," had wraparound eyes and were wearing long yellowish robes. Their arms were loaded with branches

Faustino called out to them. They looked at him, hurried into the UFO and suddenly took off with a blast of air that nearly knocked him down. The UFO itself was big, silvery and shaped like a squashed oval. The reflection of the sun from it hurt his eyes.

Case Two: On the morning of April 7, 1964, Maria do Socorro Inocencio was washing clothes in a pond when she heard a noise in the sky. Seeing an object coming down very rapidly, she hid in some trees and watched as it landed on the ground.

Two beings emerged. They had small bodies, large heads and wraparound eyes and were greenish looking. They had backpacks on their clothing, which looked like loose-fitting jumpsuits. They were talking to each other but she couldn't understand what they were saying.

The two spent about half an hour picking up stones, pebbles, plants and soil samples, all within fifty feet of the UFO. She was only fifteen feet from them but was quite frightened and stayed hidden. The two beings then entered the craft, which quickly rose into the air, spinning and leaving a sort of vapor trail behind.

Maria was nine months pregnant. She lives in Pocinhos, Paraiba, and had gone to the farm to stay with her sister. She remembers the date she saw the UFO because it was just three days before her youngest child was born.

Case Three: Around midnight one moonlit night in May, 1974, Manoel Pacheco Juca, forty-seven, and a friend, Pedro, had been fishing along the Atlantic coast two miles from his farm near Paraipaba, Ceara. They were walking to

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another location when Manoel looked back over his shoulder and saw something that hadn't been there minutes earlier.

About forty yards away were three men standing near what looked like a jeep near the water. Manoel and Pedro were frightened. They ducked down and watched. The strangers were dressed in dark clothing and apparently did not see them.

Five times the three strangers hurried side by side into the ocean and just as quickly returned to the jeep. They were wet and seemed to be measuring something with a rope. They said nothing, and no sounds were heard. After about three minutes, the three climbed into the jeep and disappeared into the ocean, jeep and all.

Case Four: Joao Ferreira, forty-seven, and his son, Ademar, twenty-one, were fishing in a river near Trairi, Ceara, one night in May, 1975. They had caught a fish and Joao had left his son to start a fire to cook it while he went to fish farther down the river.

About eight o'clock, Joao heard his son shout: "Father! Someone's trying to catch me!" Joao ran back and, in the light of the fire, saw a blue disc-shaped object as big as a car on the sand with three men standing near it. The UFO had a dome and five or six windows around it.

One of the men was a short, stocky fellow and the other two were tall. The stocky one had yellow clothes. The tallest one wore green and the other blue. All had light skin.

"I surprised them and they quickly entered the disk and went away," Joao said. "What impressed me was that when it took off, it gave off all these sparks or rays of different colors and it went very rapidly. It lit up the whole area. I understood them to tell me: 'You stay here, we're leaving.' I understood the stocky man even though he wasn't speaking Portuguese.

"I didn't see my son at first and I was crazy trying to

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find him. I thought they'd taken him into the spaceship but he had hidden in the bushes beside the river."

Case Five: Just before dusk one afternoon in 1976, Hercilia da Costa, then nine, was walking home from catechism class in Sao Goncalo do Amarante, Ceara. As she passed through a patch of woods, she saw a light ahead. Seconds later she came upon a UFO sitting on three legs in a dry river bed.

Gathered near it were seven men about six feet tall in dark suits. They appeared to be surprised to see her and stared at her. One was kneeling and putting pebbles into a transparent bag. He spoke to her but she didn't understand him.

"The men looked like Americans," Hercilia said. "They had normal mouths, hands, no hair. I didn't see the hair. It was covered by their clothes. I didn't see their eyes. They were wearing black boots that came to mid-calf. The man who spoke to me opened his mouth when he spoke. They didn't try to catch me."

The UFO was round, silver colored, had a door and two little round windows with dark glass in them. Hercilia remembers very clearly seeing two red lights on the front and hearing a motor noise that sounded like a helicopter.

"I was so afraid that I felt chest pains," she said. "I ran back to the village and told some men who went back there, Horacio and Augusto. When they got there about ten minutes later, the UFO was gone but they found footprints and three square holes in the ground."

I have talked to all of these people, been in the homes of most of them and even stayed overnight in the home of Manoel Pacheco Juca and his wife, Adelaide, a poor but generous couple. None of these people have the slightest doubt about what they saw, and most are certain they have seen alien beings in craft that come from some place other

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than Earth.

Comparisons

In the 1964 case, Maria Inocencio described the two beings as "greenish looking." This is unusual because "little green men" are rarely ever seen. Nearly everyone, especially scoffers, makes jokes about them, but in the hundreds of cases I've investigated, there were only four or five such reports.

One other interesting thing about her case and Faustino's in 1950 is that they are typical of the humanoid cases reported in those days, when UFO crews seemed to be obsessed with picking up plants, stones and soil samples. Such incidents were reported in many parts of the world in the 1950s and 1960s but are seldom heard of now.

In 1976, nine-year-old Hercilia saw seven men next to a landed UFO, with one of them kneeling down and picking up stones. By that time, there were fewer and fewer such reports. Hercilia was a quiet-spoken, impressive witness. A twenty-four-year-old housewife and mother when she told us her story in September, 1991, she often paused to think before giving precise answers to our questions.

Antonio Duarte's experience near Mossoro in 1988 and Manoel Pacheco's on the beach in 1974 are somewhat similar to Hercilia's. Duarte saw three busy beings floating to the ground and back up into a UFO before it disappeared in a silent explosion, and Pacheco and his friend saw three men running back and forth between their "jeep" and the ocean. In all these cases the entities gave the impression that they were very busy doing something of great importance. And that may be the key.

Some researchers suspect that much of the so-called activity of UFO crews on the ground is a deception, that the aliens are aware of witnesses watching them and that the gathering of soil samples or whatever is just a show, a

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display of some kind. What the motives could be is anybody's guess. One possibility is that they want people to believe they are explorers from other worlds. This transition from "sample gathering" to plucking humans and dogs from the ground may be part of an evolutionary process in the phenomenon.

What we can say is that these craft come in many shapes and sizes, not only in Brazil but throughout the world, and they have crews consisting of small creatures with large heads or people who look like normal humans and sometimes both.

The fact that there are so many UFOs, of so many shapes and sizes, makes it hard to believe UFOs come from other planets or stars in our universe. With hundreds of thousands of sightings and encounters reported throughout the world, even millions, there would have to be a steady stream of UFOs coming from all parts of the universe to account for them. This fact alone — among others -- is what keeps many scientists from considering the possibility that UFOs are real. So what are they and where do they come from?

1. In most cases he goes back several different times to question and requestion the witnesses. This is to check for discrepancies and guard against a hoax and —once he's convinced the witness is telling the truth— to get as much detail as possible.
2. I've heard this description many times in the United States as well, especially in northern Wisconsin and southwestern Missouri.
3. More on this in Chapter Thirty.
4. Keesh-er-RAM-oh-been. This is a city in Ceara one hundred thirty miles south of Fortaleza.

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Chapter Thirty

THE GOVERNMENT

There was a brief moment when the Brazilian government was surprisingly open about UFOs. That was immediately after twenty-one UFOs were tracked on radar in the skies over much of Brazil on the night of May 19, 1986.

Six jet interceptors armed with missiles were scrambled, three F-5Es from an air base near Rio de Janeiro and three French Mirages from another base near Brasilia, the nation's capital. For several hours the jets chased or were chased by what were described as balls of light.

Four days later, on May 23, the government held an unprecedented televised press conference to let the fighter pilots tell the country what they'd seen when they went after the UFOs.

"I watched the lights in front and on each side of my radar screen," said one pilot. "I managed to close to within six miles of one light, but from that moment on I was unable to get closer."

Another pilot said: "I was warned by ground control there were several contacts ahead of me approximately twenty miles away. I was also warned that contacts were approaching from behind and they came on until they were two miles behind me. I had to dive and as I did the contacts started to climb."

Still another pilot was told by ground controllers that he was being pursued by thirteen objects, six on one side of him and seven on the other. Yet another pilot chased a ball of light two hundred miles out to sea before breaking off and returning to his base.

What triggered the surprising public acknowledgement was the fact that Ozires Silva, one of Brazil's most respected

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industrialists, was personally involved in the incident. For years, Silva had been president of the aircraft manufacturer Embraer but at the government's request had recently taken charge of Petrobras, the nation's troubled oil corporation.

"Unidentified Aerial Movements"

Earlier in the evening of May 19, Silva had conferred with then President Jose Sarney in Brasilia and was returning to Sao Jose Dos Campos, near Sao Paulo, in an executive jet piloted by Alcir Pereira da Silva. As they prepared to land at nine o'clock, air controllers told them three unidentified objects were in their path. Then Silva and his pilot spotted red, white and green objects in front of them and chased them but couldn't catch up with them.

The next day, Ney Siqueira, head of CINDACTA, or the Integrated Center of Air Defense and Air Traffic Control, refused to describe the objects as UFOs. Instead, he called them "unidentified aerial movements."[1]

Siqueira's explanation: "We don't possess sufficient technical means to be able to state that they were unidentified flying objects."

The following evening, Wednesday, May 21, Air Force Minister Octavio Moreira Lima went on national TV and made a short statement: "Technically, there is no explanation. We shall obtain the CINDACTA reports. We haven't the slightest intention of hiding anything from the press."

Two days later, after the Air Force pilots had told their stories on the nationally televised news conference, Moreira Lima declared that nothing more would be said until a special investigative commission had given its report, which he said was expected in "about two months."

That was in 1986 and, since then, the government has said nothing more about the incident.

For some months before these events occurred, I had

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been planning to visit Brazil the following September. Encouraged by the government's apparent openness about the May 19 sightings, I wrote to Moreira Lima in June, informing him that an almost identical over flight of UFOs had occurred above the city of Tucson, Arizona on the night of October 5, 1985, except that no jets were scrambled.

The Tucson-based Aerial Phenomena Research Organization had reported that sixty to one hundred objects were tracked on Federal Aviation Administration and military radar as they passed over Tucson in groups of four to seven each.[2] One radar observer also noted that one object was much larger than the others, an object that an eyewitness said was cigar shaped.[3]

The Colares Investigations

I sent a copy of the APRO report to Moreira Lima, along with information about similar sightings of large numbers of UFOs, including one in Rio de Janeiro in March, 1978 and another in Mendoza, Argentina, in July of the same year. I also requested an interview with him and asked for permission to talk with the pilots and controllers involved in the incidents on the night of May 19. I never received a reply.

When I got to Brazil in September, I learned that nearly all Brazilian UFO investigators had made similar requests and all had been ignored.[4]

The only other instance in which the Brazilian government has shown such an overt interest in sightings was in 1977 and 1978, when UFOs harassed people in Colares and other villages at the mouth of the Amazon river. A team composed of an officer and sergeants from the air force base in Belem spent six months investigating several hundred reports of sightings and encounters.

Brazilian researchers say that occasionally over the

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years military personnel have appeared on the scene of encounters in other parts of the country, but the general government policy seems to be to ignore the phenomenon.

In 1977 when sightings were reported nearly every night for four months in the Pinheiro area, the mayor sent an urgent telegram requesting the government to intervene. He never received a reply. However, a researcher in another part of the country told me he knew definitely that a colonel had gone to Pinheiro, perhaps clandestinely, to see what was going on. If so, the officer never revealed his presence to the mayor.

The government obtained a wealth of data from the Colares sightings. I first heard about them in 1979 from Irene Granchi, the grande dame of Rio de Janeiro investigators who was the source of all my Brazilian reports in those days. At her suggestion, I went to the air force headquarters in Belem and found my way to the office of Captain Uyrange Hollanda.[5] He was the base's finance officer and was also the officer who had directed the official on-site investigation of the Colares-area cases.

Hollanda was suspicious of me at first, but I convinced him I had a legitimate interest in the sightings and had no ax to grind. Eventually, he decided to trust me and later, after finishing work for the day, he and Sergeant Flavio Costa, a meteorologist, described in detail some of the several hundred sightings and encounters they had investigated.

Hollanda and Costa said they'd also taken a number of photos of UFOs, which they sent to air force headquarters in Brasilia along with the written reports. Hollanda said that was the last he heard of the photos and reports. He and Costa then showed me copies of some of the photographs. The two men seemed quite pleased by what they'd photographed but to me the photos showed only simple blobs of light in a black sky.

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I do not recall all that we talked about that evening but nothing was said about injuries or deaths in Colares.

The next day, Sergeant Costa, an interpreter and I flew to Colares in a hired Cessna. It was only then, in talking with some of the villagers, that I learned some people had been injured.

What Hollanda Saw

More than ten years later I finally understood why Hollanda and Costa were excited by the photos they'd shown me that night in 1979. In the early 1990s, a civilian researcher in another part of the country gave me photocopies of some of the reports and photos that Hollanda's team had sent to Brasilia. On the backs of the photos were finely drawn sketches of what they had seen when they photographed the UFOs.[6]

Hollanda was personally interested in the phenomenon, and we kept in touch after my 1979 visit.[7] It was he who told me that a river boat captain had sent a letter to the air force base commander saying two fishermen had been killed by a UFO near Santarem. At the time, the idea of deaths in UFO encounters was new to me, and what Hollanda said about the fishermen was intriguing. In July, 1981 the two of us joined forces to try to confirm the report.[8]

As reported earlier, we spent several days in the Amazon but never found anyone who knew anything substantial about the dead fishermen. We'd gone there in a hired Cessna, but the plane later had engine problems and we had to fly back to Belem from Santarem by jetliner. While sitting in the airport restaurant waiting for the airliner to leave Santarem, Hollanda told Charles Tucker and me a fascinating tale about some of his team's investigations in the Colares area. His commanding officer had sent him there soon after the sightings began.

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"We were looking for the ladies who got hurt by the UFO beams, and I talked with one who was showing me the scars where she got hurt," Hollanda said. "About that time, I was called outside to see something crossing the sky. The sky was cloudy and the object passed higher than the clouds, but was blinking very rapidly. It was an intense blue light, about one thousand feet high, going from south to north. I thought it was a satellite, but two minutes later it came back in the other direction. We were surprised to see this.

UFO Goes Into the Water

"We took photos of it and, when they were developed, the object was shaped like a barrel lying down. There was an American priest there at the time, Alfredo De Lao, who said he had seen this many times, very close."

Hollanda stayed in Colares for fifteen days that time, interviewing people and taking photographs. He then returned to Belem, and one or two days later, returned to Colares for another fifteen days.

"On my first day back," he said, "my group saw a UFO entering the water. I wasn't there because I was sleeping. Sergeant Flavio Costa and others took pictures of it entering the water. It was near a fisherman's boat and, when the fishermen returned to shore, they were afraid. They told us they'd seen a big ball of fire entering the water about five hundred meters from their boat.

"We returned to Belem. I was worried because things were happening at Baia Do Sol, closer to Belem, and people there were very much afraid. So I went there with four friends and, about six or seven o'clock one night, we saw three UFOs crossing from west to east very high. About twenty minutes later, we saw two more going south.

"I had to return to Belem because my wife and my children were waiting for me to buy a Christmas tree. It was around seven when we decided to return. Then one of my

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friends pointed to the sky and there was a big object stopped over us about two hundred fifty meters high. It was as big as a city bus. I couldn't see the precise shape.

"There was something dark in the middle of a yellow shining but the yellow shining grew brighter and dimmed. It pulsated at different intervals five times. When it pulsated, it lit the water with a strong yellow light. We were very excited, but we finally had to leave because my family was waiting for me.

"The next morning, I told my commander what I'd seen and he asked me to continue the research, so I did. We had heard a story about three young people hunting in Rio Guajara, near Belem. One of them stayed in the forest and the other two stayed in a boat waiting for him, and while they waited, they fished. The guy in the forest was in a tree. He climbed the tree and hung a hammock to wait for small animals.

"He was surprised and frightened to see a bright light approach, make like a half loop and stop over him. He was afraid and he jumped to the ground and tried to hide. The light from the UFO was so bright it hurt his eyes. He shaded his eyes with his fingers, and he saw a door open on the bottom of the UFO, and a man came down with a red light in his hand which he shined on the hammock.

"This young man's name is Luis. Luis said the man from the UFO just floated down a beam of light with his arms and legs spread out and he shined the red light over the hammock. The light was in the palm of his hand. The man then returned to the UFO in the same way.

"Luis began to run but the forest was muddy. He ran and ran and the disc chased him with the beam of light. It took him an hour to get to the place where his friends were. When he got to the shore, his friends weren't there and he screamed. They heard his screams and walked back and saw

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the object, a big ball of light, searching for them. All three jumped into the water and swam and tried to hide in the weeds.

"Then the UFO stopped over the boat and again the man came floating down like before and passed a red light in his hand over the boat, searching for something in the boat. Then the man went back to the flying saucer and it went away.

Little Man Comes Back

"Luis said the man was about a meter and a half tall and appeared to be wearing a black suit of some kind. He said he could see inside the dome of the UFO and he saw another man in there. The disc was three to four meters wide and about two meters high.

"Luis is twenty-two or twenty-three now, the other guy would be about twenty-one and the third was a boy, who would be fourteen now. This happened in August, 1977. I talked to Luis and convinced him to go back to the same place with me and four air force sergeants. He was afraid at first. He wasn't willing to cooperate but finally he agreed.

"We went to the tree he had been in and stayed there until about ten o'clock one night. Nothing happened, so I decided we would go to where they'd tied up their boat, the one the humanoid examined. We stayed on a small island in the middle of the river and decided to fish with a net. We put the net in the water and waited.

"About eleven-thirty, we saw a big ball of fire, dark yellow, about two kilometers down the Guajara river. We took some photographs of it.

"Then, about eleven-forty-five, we saw the same ball of fire again, but this time it was smaller and going at a slower speed. Now it was only a thousand meters from us over on the right side of the river and maybe two hundred meters

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high.

"At midnight, a big ball of fire passed directly over us, going across the river. When it got to the other side, it turned its light out and we saw a disc-shaped object. I can't tell you the exact size, but it was about twice as big as a Boeing 737, very, very big. It was amber-colored with many bright white windows, many windows. I couldn't count them. When it passed over us, we heard a small noise like a turbine, but low. It crossed the river and disappeared.

"We photographed this object also, but the only thing that came out in our pictures was a point of light. I couldn't understand that when we could see a disc shape. Then, about two in the morning, we saw it again. This time it was coming down the right side of the river. It looped out and swung back toward us and stopped for a minute above the opposite shore. It looked like the sun had stopped in front of us about seventy meters away and six to eight meters high. It was a very, very big ball of bluish light. It was very bright but we could look at it without hurting our eyes.

"We were taking pictures all the time. Then the object went into the sky very fast and shut its light off. When it did that, we couldn't see the shape but there was one green light on top and a red light on the bottom. We couldn't see the shape but when the pictures were developed, we could see a large disc-shaped object standing vertically, rather than horizontally.

"The picture showed a door or window near the top and from it a beam of light was shining down in our direction. We saw none of this when we took the pictures. All this came out only in the photos. The right side of the object was dark yellow and the left side white and light yellow, and there were several circular marks on the left side."

Eight Different Shapes of UFOs

Hollanda said he and the sergeants interviewed two

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hundred to three hundred people over a six-month period in Colares, Vigia, Itaituba, Baia Do Sol and Rio Guajara, all villages or towns northeast of Belem.

"We took about three hundred photos and we photographed eight different shapes of UFOs. The first was a disc with windows. The second was rectangular, like a barrel on its side. The third was a trapezoid, or like a pyramid with its top cut off. The fourth was like a Boeing. The fifth was triangular or like an arrowhead. They flew very high in the sky and very fast. They were also seen leaving the water. The sixth was domed, like an Adamski UFO. The seventh was pointed on the top and bottom and was black on top and white on the bottom. The eighth was like a ball with three sticks coming out the back, with lights on the sticks.

"We had many files and photographs, and all these were turned over to the air force. I don't know what the air force did with this material. They don't say anything."

The copy of Hollanda's report to Brasilia that I obtained many years later gives only sparse details of two hundred eighty-four sightings and encounters in Colares and eighteen other villages and towns in the area. Of these, nearly two hundred occurred in 1977 and the rest in 1978. Also included are sixteen maps showing where incidents occurred, and nineteen photos of UFOs. In the photocopies I have, they still look like blobs of light in the night but the accompanying sketches show what Hollanda and his team saw when they photographed the UFOs.

Nowhere in the two hundred eighty-four summaries is there mention of anyone being burned or dying as a result of an encounter.

A Brazilian investigator told me that he had also obtained copies of the official report of the investigation, but when he showed them to me, they were quite different from the ones I have. Again, though, there was no mention of

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injuries or deaths.

Dr. Wellaide Carvalho said members of the air force team knew people had been burned and had drugs available to help calm the victims. She said the investigators were also aware of the deaths "but they did not have the authority to order autopsies."

Obviously there are many more official reports filed away someplace in Brasilia, not only on the Colares-area cases and the 1986 over flights but possibly many other incidents. Why they remain a secret is something only the government can answer.

1. Most of this information was supplied to me by veteran UFO researcher Irene Granchi, author of UFOs and Abductions in Brazil (Horus House Press, 1994).
2. Then America's oldest UFO group, APRO went out of existence in 1988 after its founder, Coral Lorenzen, died. Her husband Jim, also highly respected in the ufological community, had died several years earlier.
3. The APRO Bulletin, Volume 33, Number 3.
4. The U. S. Government is sometimes no more cooperative. Citing the Freedom of Information Act, on May 25, 1986, I asked the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington for copies of any reports it had received on the Brazilian UFO incidents that took place on the night of May 19. Two weeks later I received a reply stating the DIA had no information on "the requested subject." However, Robert Todd of Ardmore, Pennsylvania, a tenacious researcher and a master of using the Freedom of Information Act, found otherwise. He obtained a copy of a report sent to the DIA from the American defense attaché in Brasilia giving details of the incidents as obtained from "various BAF sources/open sources." (BAF is the

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Brazilian Air Force.)

5. OO-ee-RAHN-gee Oh-LAHN-duh.
6. The researcher said the reports had been leaked to civilians soon after they'd been sent to Brasilia.
7. Hollanda was a captain when I first met him. He had risen to the rank of major by 1981, and in 1992 he retired as a lieutenant colonel. Sergeant Costa later left the Air Force but remained in the Reserve. He died of a stroke in March, 1993.
8. This was immediately after I left the magazine I had been working for. It was the first time I had gone to Brazil at my own expense to investigate cases simply to satisfy my own curiosity.

Chapter Thirty-One

THEY'RE STILL HERE

Finding people who've seen UFOs isn't difficult. You just talk to people and ask questions. Sooner or later you're bound to find someone who's seen something or knows somebody who has.

I first discovered this in Manitoba, Canada, in 1976. No matter where I went, there was always someone who had a tale to tell. The same held true later in the United States, and it's just as true in Brazil. It may be true in every country in the world.

Each time I've gone to Brazil, it was with the idea of checking out old cases I'd heard about and wanted to look into firsthand, but each time I came back with many more new cases than old ones.

For years I'd kept a one-page report from a Natal investigator, now dead, about an alleged abduction attempt.

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It said that one cold morning a farm woman tending a fire in her backyard heard a noise behind her. She turned and saw her eight-year-old son being sucked up by a disc-shaped object. She panicked but managed to grab his legs and pull him down, and the UFO went away. This reportedly occurred in the Serra do Doutor, a low mountain range northwest of Campo Redondo in Rio Grande do Norte.

That supposedly happened in 1981, but it wasn't until 1992 that I was able to visit Serra do Doutor. Cynthia Luce and I were touring the state and, when we reached Campo Redondo, we started searching for the woman named in the report. We never found her, but we did find twelve other people who'd had sightings or encounters.

Tremendous Heat

Most of those interviews came when we left the main highway and drove up a dirt road that climbed higher and higher to the top of Serra Verde, at over two thousand two hundred feet the tallest peak in the state. Huge communications towers owned by TELERN, the telephone company of Rio Grande do Norte, stand on the highest spot. A surprising number of people live on the mountain, and five of them told us they had seen strange lights moving about in the night sky.

One man saw more than he wanted to. Versalao Perreira Dos Santos, a forty-nine-year-old farmhand, had a terrifying experience on August 25, just ten days before we talked to him.

"I was walking by myself about nine p.m. when suddenly a bright light came on around me," he said. "I was near the TELERN towers. It lit up an area about a hundred meters around. It was a bright white light which then became red. When it was white, it started getting hot. When it was red, the heat was unbearable. Then the light got smaller and smaller and it went away, slowly, and the heat went with it. I

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was scared to death."

Current Cases

During the 1991 and 1992 field trips, more than thirty other witnesses described encounters that had occurred recently, evidence that UFOs are still very much with us. Among the more interesting or stranger reports are these:

October, 1989: A seventy-one-year-old mid-wife, Raimunda Barbosa, and two teenage granddaughters, Antonia and Rita, live on a farm in northern Ceara. Shortly after dark one evening they had bought a bottle of propane gas and were walking home when they heard what sounded like a pig grunting in the lane ahead of them. They were almost on top of it when a bright light suddenly came on, rose jerkily into the air and went away. "It went up in fits and starts but quickly," Raimunda said. "It was shaped like a coffin and gave off yellow, clear and red rays of light."

November, 1989: Jackson Felix Pereira, twenty- nine, a photographer and founder of a UFO group in Sao Jose do Compestre, Rio Grande do Norte, has recorded sixty-eight confirmed cases that occurred within fifteen miles of the town since 1968. None were deaths, abductions or occupant sightings but, in twenty cases, people reported being chased by UFOs.

Jackson's most significant case was a landing in a field that left impressions in the ground in November, 1989. They consisted of nine pairs of holes, all six inches deep, in a symmetrical circle covering an area seventeen feet across. Between two of the pairs of holes were four other depressions in a straight line, also six inches deep. The circle appeared to have been burned and vacuumed clean of debris.

April 11, 1991: For several hours in the evening, twenty-five military policemen and a lieutenant at the Papuda maximum-security prison near Brasilia watched a lighted

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object hover thirty to forty yards above a command post near the prison. It was oval-shaped and vertical and rapidly changed colors — blue, yellow and some green. The color red did not appear but suddenly the whole object turned red from the center out to the edge.

The men ran outside for a better look but the object had vanished. Seconds later, it reappeared above the prison itself some distance away, changing colors constantly, occasionally blinking.

During the evening the lieutenant, Jorge Damasceno, talked four times by phone with air traffic controllers at the Brasilia airport several miles away. Eventually the tower confirmed tracking the UFO on radar, and once the lieutenant heard the tower order a jetliner to alter course because the UFO was in its path. At ten forty-five p.m., the object vanished.[1]

March, 1991: About eight o'clock one night, farmer Joao Bernardino Torres, forty-three, was riding a bicycle in the village of Cajazeiras in Rio Grande do Norte when a huge bluish light lit up about thirty feet above him. He stopped, put his feet on the ground and looked up, tilting his head back. As he did, he became numb and couldn't move. Two minutes later, the light vanished and his paralysis ended.

April 1991: Rita Lima, fifty-three, her husband Joao, sixty-four, and their seventeen-year-old son, Francisco, live on the edge of Lake Apodi in Rio Grande do Norte. One night they had visited her sister, who lives two miles away on another part of the lake, and were returning home in their canoe. Suddenly an intense red light a foot and a half in size came on above them and lit up the area around the canoe.

"We didn't know what to do," Rita said. "We stopped the canoe. We were terrified because people said this light takes people. The light was so bright we couldn't make out what it was."

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A short while later the object went away, blinking as it ascended over the town of Apodi.

September 9, 1991: Fifteen-year-old Wellington Silva had visited a friend and was walking to the farm home that he shares with his parents and grandparents near Ibicuitinga, Ceara.[2] It was dark, around eight in the evening. As he was walking past an aunt's house two hundred yards from his own home, he felt heat on his head and shoulders. He turned and saw three small lights above the ground about sixty feet away.

He hid behind a tree, but the lights moved toward him. He had been carrying his shirt over one shoulder but dropped it and ran to his aunt's house. No one was home, so he broke the latch on a wooden window and dived inside. For about fifteen minutes he watched as a circular object not quite as big as the house hovered ten feet over his shirt. It had a number of small lights that blinked on and off. Then the UFO disappeared and Wellington ran home.

An hour and a half later, he went back for his shirt. When he took it home, he and his family discovered four circular areas on it, each as big as an apple. When he touched them, they crumbled to pieces.

For three days, Wellington's back felt as if it had been burned. He suffered from headaches and eye irritation for fifteen days.

September, 1991: Marcondes Cury, fifty-three, owner of an auto parts store in Santa Cruz, Rio Grande do Norte, was tending a sick cow lying under a tree on his farm near the city. Five or six people were with him, including a nephew, Etefferson Carvalho, nineteen. It was about seven at night and they were using a lantern to see. Suddenly, a flash lit up everything for fifty yards around them. The light was gone as quickly as it had come, but Etefferson had seen more.

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"I was standing up and looking off in the sky when they were working on the ground and I saw the light coming toward us," he said. "It passed within two hundred to three hundred meters. When it got near it just gave out a big blast of light, and then just shut it off and went straight up into the sky."

March, 1992: Josefa Oliveira, twenty-nine, lives with her parents, Pedro, seventy-five, and Maria Emerita, sixty-nine, on a farm south of Lajes in Rio Grande do Norte. It was eight o'clock and her parents were asleep. Josefa had washed the supper dishes and when she went into the backyard to throw the dish water out she saw a bright light on a hill a hundred yards away. It began moving toward her and she ran into the house. The UFO hovered over a tree near the back door.

By now, Josefa had run into her bedroom and lay down. The bright light then began filtering through the tile roof, and Josefa's bed began shaking. She was badly frightened and thought the UFO was trying to take her away. After a half hour, it left and the bed stopped shaking.

May, 1992: Ana Teixeira, sixty-six, her daughter Maria, twenty-six, and granddaughter Francisca, eight, were walking along a highway in the Serra do Doutor mountains in Rio Grande do Norte.[3] It was six-thirty at night and dark. Maria saw a "little star" that was moving and called it to their attention. Then it came closer, and all three became apprehensive. Suddenly it flared into a brilliant blue light a hundred yards away, lighting up everything around. It seemed to be spitting red sparks from its top as it hovered over a cashew tree. Ana, Maria and Francisca were scared to death and ran into a nearby house. When they looked out again, the thing had gone away.

August 31, 1992: About nine-thirty at night, Damiao Dos Santos, twenty-nine, saw lights zigzagging back and

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forth underneath high tension wires near Alto do Sitio, a town north of Natal. They changed colors, going from yellow-orangish to blue and back, and also changed shape, getting smaller and then bigger. He got the impression they were not pulsating but were actually changing shape.

September, 1992: Severino Rodrigues, sixty, was driving to his farm south of Lajes, Rio Grande do Norte, about eight at night when he saw a big red light high on the east side of Mount Cabuji, an extinct volcano. No one lives on the mountain and there are no roads on it. The light was stationary and solid red. It was sharply defined and very clearly outlined. Severino turned south to go around Cabuji and, when he looked back, the red ball was gone.

March 20, 1993: For nearly six hours, astronomer Claudio Pamplona and eleven other people, all members of an astronomy club, observed a lighted object about thirteen thousand feet above Fortaleza and took numerous photos of it before it disappeared about midnight.

"The object was stationary," Pamplona, fifty, a university professor, said. "When the stars and planets moved, the object stayed there. That's when we realized it was something like a UFO."

The object was discovered by his wife, lolanda, thirty-eight, also an astronomer and high school teacher, as she searched for Jupiter in preparation for the club's weekly meeting.

"At first we saw a bright cloud and then we saw two little balls of light inside the cloud," Pamplona said. "One was red and the other was orange."

Denis Weaver, a young astronomer and teacher, took a number of twenty-second exposures with a powerful camera. The prints show two very fuzzy balls of light, one larger than the other, with no discernible details. Pamplona said that if the bigger object was at thirteen thousand feet as he

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estimated, "It would have been about two hundred fifty meters across."[4]

Thousands of other people in Fortaleza saw the lights because five radio stations and several TV stations were broadcasting reports throughout the evening, and people gathered in the streets to watch.

April, 1993: Arnaldo Cordeiro, thirty-three, and his father, Juvenal, sixty-seven, were hunting in the mountains around Quixaba twelve miles south of Sao Tome, Rio Grande do Norte, when they saw a light moving behind the clouds.[5] It then turned on a beam of light and focused it on them. They hid under a tree.

The beam lit an area about thirty feet around them and continued shining for about ten minutes. All that time it rapidly changed from green to red, blue, white and other colors. The rays seemed to bounce off the ground and pass between their legs.

"We were afraid all during this," Arnaldo said. "We wanted to shoot at it but didn't dare to because we were afraid of what it might do. This is not something from Brazil and not something from the Americans."

Jose Paixao, who lives in Quixaba, said many people in the Quixaba area saw something similar in 1992. "It was a powerful light like fire that would stop in the air," he said. "It would come within two to three hundred meters and three or four people felt like they'd been shocked."

May 10, 1993: Heraldo Medeiros, thirty-two, his wife, Ikka, thirty-one, their three children and a teenage girl were driving back to Fortaleza from Santa Quiteria about three in the morning when they saw a bright light in the sky. Medeiros, a professional photographer, stopped, got out a video camera and put it on a tripod. Off and on for the next three and a half hours he videotaped the object.

Four times they saw a smaller object emerge from the

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bigger one, move off a short distance and then go back. When this happened, it appeared as if a ray was stretched between the two. The object remained in the same position until about a half hour after daybreak and then disappeared. The video is very sharp at times and has been shown on national TV.

Prolonged Sightings

There are some areas where repeated sightings have been reported for years. One is just south of Sao Tome in Rio Grande do Norte, where Sandoval Bezerro, a forty- eight-year-old farmer, lives. Since early in 1991, he has seen strange lights moving about low in the sky just before dawn.

Sandoval lives in Sao Tome, but all his life has worked at the family farm seven miles south of town. Every day, weekends included, he gets up at three in the morning, has something to eat and then walks two hours to reach the farm. Part of the way he goes by road and part through fields, taking shortcuts. In mid-afternoon, he walks back home. It is during the walk before daybreak that he sees the lights.

"It's a ball of light that wanders around," he said. "Sometimes it's like a headlight, yellow, and sometimes red, like fire. It changes color. It lights up the ground."

The farm is just two or three miles north of Quixaba, where Arnaldo Cordeiro and his father saw a UFO in April, 1993.

Sandoval used to carry a lantern but stopped after a ball of light came toward him. At first it was small but then grew bigger. The area around him began getting lighter, frightening him so much that he hid in the bushes. Suddenly the light turned off and Sandoval heard an explosion, like a rifle shot.

He left the lantern home after that but, since then, he

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always looks around him all the way to the farm. If he sees a light and it appears to be close, he hides until it goes away.

There is no pattern to the sightings, Sandoval said. When Cynthia Luce and I first talked to him in September, 1992, he was seeing lights at least once a week and sometimes every morning. I talked to him again in July, 1993 and, by then, he said, the sightings had tapered off to only two or three a month.

1990 to present: Another area where strange lights have been seen frequently is Acari, in southwestern Rio Grande do Norte. The principal witness is Bebeto, the water tank truck driver who saw the weird "TV window" in the sky.

Bebeto and his helpers deliver water to residents within a twenty-mile radius of Acari and always end their day well after the sun sets. It is dark when they see balls of light moving about among the desert brush. They vary in color and size but usually are yellow, red or white. They turn on and off. Sometimes they pulsate.

One came close enough that Bebeto and the other men could see a cylindrical-shaped object, spinning rapidly. It frightened them, and Bebeto started driving faster to get away from it, but the object got in front of them. He stopped and it stopped. Now it appeared to be an oval object, somewhat flattened, a dull yellow in color. Bebeto drove on and the object stayed with them for two or three miles before going away.

1991 to present: On top of Serra Verde in September, 1992, Cynthia Luce and I talked briefly with Antonio De Oliveira, forty-six, who was walking with his wife, hurrying to get to their home at Quixaba before dark.

"For the last two years I've seen lights almost constantly when I go out at night," he said. "Sometimes they're red, sometimes blue, sometimes yellow, and they blink. Sometimes they're stationary and then they move a

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little bit. Everybody seems to see them around here."

Quixaba is the same area where Arnaldo Cordeiro and his father hid from a UFO in April, 1993, and not far from where Sandoval has been seeing lights moving about before dawn for several years.

1991 to present: UFOs have also been appearing irregularly in the Ibiapaba mountain range in Ceara two hundred miles west of Fortaleza. Since the flap began in April, 1991, Thynam Salmito de Melo, thirty-four-year-old founder of a UFO group in Sao Benedito, has investigated fifty-eight cases.

In general, people report seeing a strange light of many colors. One man was hit by a light and momentarily paralyzed until the UFO went away. He felt intense heat and suffered small blisters. On a neighboring farm, two girls, eight and twelve, were chased by the light and suffered minor burns like sunburns.

One man who was relieving himself was badly frightened when a light suddenly appeared forty yards above him. He ran into the house and watched from there. When the UFO went away, it left behind a smell of sulfur.

In all, some twenty-five people said they had been chased by the light in the Ibiapaba area. In nearly every case the witnesses panicked, and for two weeks no one in one area would go outside at night. Farm production fell and people were in danger of starving.

In May, 1993, a thirty-two-year-old pregnant woman fainted when she thought a UFO was chasing her. Other witnesses said the object, like a fireball, then went straight up, changed directions and moved horizontally, came back down to the mountain ridge, went up again and back down and finally moved out into space.

An Old Phenomenon

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All these cases, and too many others to list, simply mean that UFOs are still being seen. There has been little, if any, let up over the years. The profusion of cases is almost mind-numbing. Details blur and run together, and sometimes the significance of what is going on is lost in the seemingly unending repetition of happenings.

For more than forty years Brazil has been the scene of numerous UFO incidents, and it continues to be a UFO hot spot. Reports go back much farther than the 1950s, and occasionally old-timers tell of hearing stories about UFOs when they were kids.

One of them is Joao Duarte de Siqueira, a farmer who was eighty-one years old when I met him in September, 1988. Fortaleza investigator Jean Alencar introduced me to Joao at the Siqueira home nestled among palm trees near a pond at Trapo in northern Ceara.

"Last night I saw a ball of fire come from some distance and stop on the far side of the lagoon," Joao said. "It lit up the whole area. This thing has been seen frequently. My father Manoel said fire was often seen in this area and sometimes it lit up the whole side of the lagoon. He said others saw it before I was born. Old men told him the carnauba trees looked like they were on fire during the night but when they went out there the next morning nothing was burned."[6]

If these strange lights were being seen before Joao was born, then they've been around since at least the turn of the century -- a possibility that gained more credence when I heard a similar report several years later.

Near Lajes in September, 1992, Maria Emerita Oliveira, sixty-nine, said: "Twenty five years ago, my ninety-year-old grandmother said she had always been seeing these things and that they signaled the end of the world."

Tens of Thousands of Cases?

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One last but significant point is this: Not only do these cases show that the phenomenon is very much alive but strongly suggest there could well be thousands or tens of thousands of such incidents occurring every year in Brazil.

In 1991, 1992 and 1993 I visited sixty-five communities or rural areas and talked to one hundred five Brazilians who'd had close encounters of one kind or another. Many of the incidents had not been reported to anyone other than their neighbors. More than half had occurred within the previous year. Brazil has more than a hundred thousand cities, towns and villages and vast rural areas, and those sixty-five localities represent only a tiny portion of the country. If the incidents in those sixty-five areas are indicative of what's happening throughout the country, there could easily be ten thousand to a hundred thousand times more sightings and encounters than anyone is aware of.

Brazil is almost as large as the United States and has one hundred sixty million people, yet probably has no more than three hundred to four hundred active investigators. Most live in the major cities. Large areas of the country have no investigators at all. Much that happens, perhaps most, never comes to the attention of any investigator.

Many Sightings Videotaped

This is best illustrated by the UFO flap that took place around Pinheiro in 1977, when sightings too1 place nearly every night for four months. The mayor estimated fifty thousand people had seen the UFOs, yet Brazilian investigators learned of these massive sightings only a year and a half later.

A flap of such magnitude probably would not go unnoticed these days. The population is ever-increasing, more paved highways are being built in the interior, electricity is spreading farther into rural areas, satellites now bring TV to even the most remote parts of the country, and

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Brazilians and the news media are much more aware of the UFO phenomenon today than they were in the 1970s.

Furthermore, camcorders are becoming ubiquitous and a number of videotapes of spectacular UFO sightings have been shown on national TV. One investigator in Sao Paulo has even developed a sideline business of collecting, copying and selling such videos.

Still, it's possible that many "mini-flaps" and most encounters go unrecorded because there are no investigators in much of the country.

The next time Brazil takes a national census, perhaps it should include a few questions to gauge how widespread the UFO phenomenon is. It's possible that we would all be shocked.

1. Incident investigated by Wilson Geraldo de Oliveira, then an anthropology student at the University of Brasilia.
2. Ee-bee-kwi-CHEEN-gah.
3. Tay-SHAY-ruh.
4. Roughly eight hundred feet across.
5. Kee-SHAH-buh.
6. During a lengthy UFO flap in McDonald County, Missouri, in early 1977, many people saw balls of fire in the woods and thought the trees were burning, but on examination in daylight the next day they would find nothing burned.

Chapter Thirty-Two

THE CHALLENGE TO SCIENCE

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This is an outrageous phenomenon that assaults common sense and all we've been taught about our world. We can't say UFOs are definitely extraterrestrial, but they're certainly alien to everything we know about life on Earth. However, there's nothing special about UFOs. They are simply something in our life that we don't yet understand. Most of the things that UFOs do seem like magic to us, but one day we'll be capable of doing the same things ourselves.

Each case in this book, if taken individually, might be dismissed as hallucination, imagination or whatever. But taken together, the mass of reports shows a clear picture of a very real alien presence that can strike terror into the hearts of victims, sometimes injuring them and on occasion causing someone to die.

It's easier to assume that people who've had UFO experiences are crazy than to face the possibility that what they say happened really did happen. But worldwide that could number in the hundreds of millions, since it seems likely that five to ten percent of the Earth's inhabitants have UFO experiences.

Many skeptics believe they're all crazy or hallucinating. Typical of this attitude is the comment of a British astronomer who dismissed the whole idea of UFOs and aliens as "bunk." He refused to be drawn into a discussion, saying it was "a closed season on nuts."[1]

Some experts who've never had a UFO experience or talked to witnesses have the arrogance to say: "You only think that happened to you." Kinder critics say people who report UFO sightings are sincere but see them because they have "certain psychological needs." If so, everyone in the world should be seeing UFOs, because we all have certain psychological needs.

Try telling Moises he had a psychological need to be traumatized by a UFO as he walked home. Or Januncio,

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Beato, Chico Gama, Francisca, Jerinaldo, Leonel, Cecilio, Hermelindo or any of the many others.

Explanations That Don't Explain

There are also the experts who claimed UFO sightings were and are a reflection of our anxieties over such things as the Cold War, something we conjure up because of our fears of nuclear holocaust and other potential disasters. However, that doesn't explain sightings long before the Cold War started. And now that it's over, the same experts say it's the instability in the world caused by the end of the Cold War that is causing people to see UFOs.

Still others who have all the answers say people have seen strange lights throughout history, as if that explains everything. It doesn't explain anything. These are not just bizarre lights in the sky. They are *things*, things that carry lights, things that create light.

But, the experts say, even if you do see things in the sky, your memory can't be trusted. "Perceptions and memories become distorted and embellished," they claim. Does this mean we can't believe anything that anybody remembers?

Finally, some skeptics claim people report UFO sightings for publicity and money. The truth is that laughter and ridicule are often the only reward for revealing a sighting or encounter. A few people have received money for their stories, but no one's gotten rich from UFOs, except possibly for two or three stars of the UFO lecture circuit.

As for the people discussed in this book, for most of them there's been no permanent change in their lives or lifestyles as a result of their encounters. The exceptions, of course, are those who died and those whose physical or mental health were ruined.

To be a victim does not require a belief in mysterious

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gods or black magic. It requires only that you be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Regardless of what happens, the experience is nearly always profound and details are vividly remembered years later.

Science: Friend or Foe?

It's true that we have no hard evidence that UFOs exist. They leave impressions in the ground, break tree limbs, and injure and kill people. They've been tracked on radar, photographed and videotaped, but none of this is convincing proof to the skeptics. On the other hand, what proof do we have that black holes exist or that the universe was created by the Big Bang? Lack of physical proof doesn't stop scientists from devoting their lives to exploring and defending such theories.

Read any newspaper article about the latest development in science and you will see it strewn with such words as "may," "maybe," "might," "could," "possibly" and similar cautionary terms. It's only when the subject is UFOs that most scientists have no doubts whatsoever: It's all "bunk." Amazing. And few if any of them have ever taken a firsthand look at the phenomenon.

However, science is not the enemy. Nor is government. On the whole, ufologists have done a poor job of presenting their case. Not all the nuts are on the fringes. Too many who have made names for themselves in the UFO community have made bold proclamations that sooner or later embarrass not only themselves but all ufologists. Too often there's been a rush to judgment, and people who should know better say: "THIS is the greatest case ever!" Then it turns out to be another ufological Chernobyl.

Science offers the best hope for explaining the UFO phenomenon. The fact is that UFOs are a part of our lives, and science must eventually deal with them. The "end of physics" — a phrase that scientists used to use to mean the

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time when we will know all there is to know about the universe -- is nowhere in sight. Just our world alone is filled with fascinating mysteries that have nothing to do with the paranormal.

One of the most exciting photographs I've ever seen was a massive enlargement of the antenna of a tiny insect, showing an incredibly intricate, symmetrical network of hairs and cross members. It is a hint of the unbelievably complex creativity of nature -- and perhaps a hint of how little we really know about life on Earth. The sum total of all we know about our world may well be nothing compared to what we have yet to learn.

And UFOs are part of that unknown world. It's just possible that science has something to learn from UFOs. Perhaps a lot. The supernatural may be more natural than we believe. On the other hand, the phenomenon may simply be too big for science to tackle.

Assuming it isn't, though, think what could be gained by using the technology that enable UFOs to do what they do. Craft as big as football stadiums, and about as aerodynamic, can rise silently, hover quietly, then zip across the horizon in seconds or land in a space no bigger than they are. We wouldn't need to spend billions of dollars developing aircraft and airports. The travel and transport industries would be revolutionized.

Not Secret Weapons

UFOs seem to be indestructible, so crashes would be rare. With unbelievable speeds, travel to other countries would take mere minutes. The savings in space, fuel, pollution and time would be unbelievable.

Quite a few people believe UFOs are secret government weapons or projects. Too bad it's not so. UFOs have been around for decades if not centuries. We've gone through several wars in the past fifty years in which aircraft with the

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capabilities of UFOs would have been very helpful.

Our space effort would have been a breeze if we had UFO-type craft. Many people have seen UFOs shoot out into the stars in seconds. But we're still strapping our cosmonauts and astronauts to rockets carrying highly explosive fuel and then firing them into space, sometimes to our great sorrow.

UFOs are capable of making instant ninety-degree turns at high speeds, turns so sharp that human beings would be crushed. We cannot do that, even with our most advanced aircraft. In July, 1993, the Pentagon proudly announced that the X-31, a joint U.S.-German experimental fighter jet, had completed a revolutionary rapid turn far beyond the aerodynamic capability of any conventional fixed-wing aircraft. The Air Force released video film and photographs of the jet as it slowed from a speed of about three hundred miles an hour and reversed direction in only nine seconds using a tight looping turn.[2]

Even at such a slow speed, it still took nearly a mile to turn around, hardly a ninety-degree turn.

Revolutionary News

This phenomenon presents a profound challenge to science. It seems to obey physical laws all its own or, if it is abiding by the laws of physics as we know them, then there are loopholes we're not aware of.

By hovering silently and effortlessly, UFOs are able to counter the effects of gravity. However, they sometimes give off sparks which fall to the ground, obviously pulled down by gravity. And UFOs have picked up people and animals and then dropped them, so gravity is still at work in these incidents, but apparently not against the UFOs themselves.

Being able to counter the pull of gravity without effort would be a revolutionary tool that could be put to work in many industries. Scientists are trying to determine what

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gravity is and why it works. Perhaps they can get their answers by solving the UFO mystery.

Some Questions For Science

It's possible that by finding the answer to just one of the many questions we have about UFOs — beyond the obvious ones of what they are, where they come from and what they're doing here -- we can begin to answer all the other questions. Here are ten questions as a start:

One: How could Faustino's diesel locomotive be slowed down each time the zigzagging UFO passed over it? Could it have been deception, that the engineer and Faustino were somehow led to believe their train was slowing down when it actually wasn't? Or was it in some way draining energy from the diesel as it passed over? If so, why didn't it have a similar effect on the humans on board the train?

Two: After many encounters, witnesses suffer severe headaches, nausea, diarrhea, extreme thirst, dizziness and other illnesses. How do UFOs cause these ailments? Are they emitting electromagnetic radiation that affects or kills certain organisms in bodies of victims, thereby causing health problems and sometimes even death? Is it possible that pre-existing health problems are aggravated?

Three: How can a brilliant light from a UFO positioned on a mountain top not only light up an entire valley as bright as daylight but also make eight people sitting on a veranda more than two miles away sick for up to two months?

Four: How can "Sudden Daylight" be explained? Many times objects have appeared just over the heads of witnesses in a blinding burst of brilliance with the suddenness of a light being switched on. What kind of man- made light would be needed to duplicate it?

Five: UFOs have been seen to rapidly shoot way out into the atmosphere so far that they are lost among the

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stars. A Pentagon document reported this happened in Montana in 1975, and former military officers have told me about UFOs being tracked by radar going one hundred and two hundred miles high in seconds. What kind of propulsion systems would be needed to do this?

Six: At least five witnesses cited in this book reported feeling a fierce but silent wind blowing around them during an encounter, as if they were in a tornado. What mechanism would be required to create this?

Seven: In two cases, UFOs burned trees. In Jerinaldo's bizarre encounter, the tree split in two from the heat and the top broke off. Other witnesses have reported feeling extreme heat, and one of them, Januncio, believed he would have died from the heat if the UFO hadn't gone away when it did. How can UFOs emit such high heat without doing damage to themselves?

Eight: The same question applies to the feeling of coldness reported by a number of witnesses, sometimes during the same incident in which they also felt very hot.

Nine: How can UFOs simply appear and disappear? Witness often don't see them go away. They just blink out or vanish. Do they move so fast that they're not seen coming or going? Do they go into another dimension? One researcher believes they are able to become invisible. Is this possible?

Ten: Perhaps the most difficult question to answer is how do UFOs change shape or appear to. Not only do they sometimes change shape but will split into two or more objects, each going away in different directions, and sometimes the objects will merge into one again.

Once those questions are answered, we have many more to tackle.

1. Chichester Observer, Sussex, England, February 4, I993.

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2. Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, July 7, 1993.

Chapter Thirty-Three

THE CHALLENGE TO INVESTIGATORS

It's possible that sometime in the next century, UFOs and the enormous efforts of ufologists around the world will be forgotten. UFOs, if remembered at all, may be just a footnote to history, an unsolved curiosity of the Twentieth Century.

We should stop treating the phenomenon as possibly the greatest story in the history of mankind and begin to regard it as simply a still unexplained part of life on Earth.

As stated before, the enemy is not science nor the government but ourselves. The bickering and feuding among ufologists have been enormously destructive. We don't need enemies. We do an excellent job of destroying each other without any outside help, although most victims of the UFO wars suffer self-inflicted wounds.

Perhaps the best thing that could happen would be for UFO organizations to disband, shut down their publications and tell members to go their own ways. The would-be stars can seek some other form of ego gratification, and serious researchers can go on quietly investigating on their own.

Many people in the UFO business are paranoid, but it is highly unlikely that anyone is out to get any of us. The only purpose such paranoia serves is to make the "victim" feel important. If the CIA is interested in my UFO files, it's welcome to them. I'd like to think someone in the government is interested in UFOs and is trying to figure out what's going on.

Belief in government conspiracies and disinformation

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programs also serve egos starved for recognition. The government can keep secrets, as we've learned many times. A notable example came to light in 1993, when documents were released showing the United States had spied on dozens of its allies during World War II.

The Whole Picture

But that was an operation lasting only several years. UFOs have been an ongoing phenomenon for at least half a century. Many ufologists believe the government has known the truth about UFOs all this time. But if so, thousands and maybe tens of thousands of people over the past fifty years would have had to know this terrible secret, and it's difficult to believe that not a single one would let something leak. It's very possible that the U.S. government and most governments around the world are as much in the dark about UFOs as the rest of us.

The U.S. government doesn't deny that UFOs exist. What it says is that they do not pose a threat to national security. And this must be true, since we've survived the phenomenon all this time.

Researchers are like the three blind men feeling the trunk, leg and tail of an elephant. I suspect very few of us — including myself -- are seeing the whole picture. We've been dealing with UFOs as a single phenomenon, and have believed until now that any "solution" must account for all of the almost infinite number of bizarre things that have been reported about UFOs. Instead, we may be dealing with a great many different phenomena, and no two of them are exactly alike. No matter how many hundreds of thousands of cases we collect, by trying to fit all the data into a single solution, we may be going at it all the wrong way.

With abduction experiences dominating the thoughts and research of the ufological community, at least in the United States, is investigation of "routine" UFO events being

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ignored or forgotten? Virtually every sighting and encounter is now considered a potential abduction, but is it? UFOs apparently aren't even necessary for abductions now and often are never even seen.

If abductions are for genetic purposes, as some researchers claim, why are old men like Antonio and Januncio attacked? If abductions and implants are as widespread as some researchers allege, we may already be totally under the control of aliens — and may have been for centuries. Are "we" possibly "they"? And if so, why are the aliens continuing to do whatever it is that we think they're doing?

In the natural evolution of UFO investigations, leading to the current concentration on abductions (what will be next?), have we reached the point where we ignore or discard the "old-fashioned" sightings and encounters, such as those in Brazil?

Abduction victims reportedly aren't safe anywhere. The UFO beings come and get them no matter where they are and no matter how much resistance they put up. In Brazil, in contrast, people are often able to hide while a UFO searches for them, and it usually gives up and goes away.

Furthermore, none of the people in the Brazilian cases cited in this book needed hypnosis to remember details of their encounters. Nor did any of them seek therapy afterward. They usually recovered quickly from the frightening and sometimes harmful experiences, although some were afraid to go outside at night for a while. They knew what happened to them.

While American-style abductions seem to be a serious problem, let's not overlook those encounters that are just as traumatic but may not be abductions.

This Is NOT the Year

It is time to put aside the Gulf Breeze, MJ-12 and other

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controversies and get back to studying the phenomenon itself. Let's also stop deluding ourselves in thinking that movies, TV shows and articles in news magazine about UFOs are part of a gradual behind-the- scenes government effort to prepare the public for the truth about UFOs. This is wishful thinking. By and large, such movies and TV shows are pure fiction, and most aren't worth watching. They give serious research a bad name.[1]

We should also declare a moratorium on declarations that "THIS is the year that we finally learn the truth." Every year someone says that, and every year we are no closer to the truth than the year before.

I particularly dread the approaching end of the century and the millennium, as if this most certainly will be THE TIME when it all comes out. Nonsense. The century and millennium exist only in our minds. January 1, 2000 (or 2001, as some claim will be the beginning of the next millennium) will be just another day, and a lot of people are going to be greatly disappointed.

It's also time to stop spreading stories about someone, always unnamed, who saw something that the government had hushed up or knew someone who accidentally examined a secret photograph or document or whatever. Such stories are common. They're UFO folklore and no one has ever successfully traced them back to the person who supposedly saw the photos or whatever. Unless you have a firsthand witness who's willing to go public, all such stories should be ignored and forgotten, never to be revived. We waste time perpetuating what in all likelihood are myths that can never be proved.

Let's also face the possibility that it's not significant that a well-known rocket scientist or public figure believes UFOs are real or are a military secret. It simply means these people are just as baffled as the rest of us and have no idea

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what UFOs are. It is nice, though, to have someone highly respected or admired siding with us.

We should renew our commitment to research. To paraphrase one of my Brazilian friends, Daniel Rebisso, many investigators are like butterfly collectors who collect specimens without having any idea how they're related to life on Earth. Some ufologists, he says, are like street sweepers, sweeping up everything. We end up with a pile of ufological debris, not knowing how any of it is connected with the rest.

Much of what we collect is junk. Once while interviewing a man who'd seen an unusual light in the sky, I listened in disbelief as another researcher asked: "Did you feel it was sucking something from your brain?"

"No," the man replied. "I just saw a light."

Something must have been sucked from the researcher's brain, long before he asked the question.

In another case, I was with a medical doctor who was also a UFO researcher. We were interviewing a man who'd had an encounter. As he described the object, the doctor interrupted to say: "What you saw was a forty-five- foot-diameter scout ship from Zeta Reticuli." One can only hope he is a far better doctor than he is a UFO investigator.

Such questions or comments have no place in serious research. They put silly ideas in the heads of witnesses and contaminate a case. Many people regard investigators as experts on UFOs, and we are not experts.

Get Back to Basics

There are good ufologists and some who are not. What we need is to develop a new breed of intelligent, young researchers who haven't yet acquired bad habits, who are still open-minded and haven't decided they know what it's all about, who can work together and set standards for research, and are able to establish guides for the kinds of

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questions to ask and not ask. Right now there are no rules. Anybody can call himself or herself an investigator.

Whatever happens, however, we must continue studying the phenomenon itself rather than keeping ourselves perpetually mired down in endless quarrels. Let's get back to basics, good research. We have to. We cannot sit back and wait for the scientists to solve the UFO mystery or for the government to reveal its big secrets.

Jerome Clark, editor of the *International UFO Reporter*, put it very nicely when he said: "What ufology is supposed to be is something like a holding action; however inadequately equipped for the task, it studies and records events which may prove important to future science even if current science is apathetic. Someday, we assume, science will have to deal with UFOs, and when it does, it will first turn to the best research and writing the most conscientious ufologists produced; if not for us, much valuable information will have been lost."[2]

1. When the phrase "*Based on a true incident*" or something similar appears at the beginning of a movie or TV program, it's a sure tip-off that what follows is all or mostly fiction. Such claims are designed solely to con the gullible into believing that what they are about to see is true.
2. *IUR* November/December, 1991.

Chapter Thirty-Four

THE WAY IT IS

UFOs may have been around for hundreds or thousands of years. They've definitely been here since World War II. This means most of the people in the world have grown up
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hearing about UFOs all their lives. Only five to ten percent of us, though, have learned about them firsthand. The rest of us know them only from books and what we've been told by those who've had encounters.

It's surprising sometimes how so many people who know so little about UFOs believe they're real. The most frequent explanation given is this: "It's pretty egotistical to think we're the only living things in the universe." It's as if they've never really thought about what it means to have creatures from other worlds in our midst, coming and going as they wish, doing whatever they want.

UFO aliens are living creatures and as such have had to evolve in their worlds just as we did in ours. We don't live in a world of magic where they are reality and we are unreal. We're all members of the universal family, living and dying.

No one should be under the illusion that UFOs are manmade. If they were, we'd have flying saucer junkyards all over the planet.

We assume UFOs are capable of anything, going wherever they want to, doing whatever they wish. But there may be limits to what they can do. The aliens operating them apparently can see in the dark but sometimes can't seem to find people who hide from them. They have technology that in battle would make them almost invincible — paralyzing people, levitating them, zapping them from a distance, hovering silently, moving at incredible speeds, and appearing and disappearing in the blink of an eye — but they've made no attempt to conquer anyone.

Little lizards and ants live on my patio, and both fascinate me for different reasons. Lizards are combative creatures that race each other to gobble up every bug in sight. Ants obviously must eat, too, but I've never seen one eating. Instead, they're always busily scurrying here and there, working together, as if following some grand master

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plan. I talk to the lizards, assuring them I mean no harm, but most flee into the plants whenever I step onto the patio. The ants ignore me, perhaps because their eyesight is so poor they don't even see me.

Take Me to Your Leader

Unfortunately, years of observing lizards and ants hasn't given me a single clue about what goes on in their tiny brains. Just as observing UFO aliens, through the stories of people who've met them, has revealed nothing about what they think.

When was the last time you asked an ant: "Take me to your leader?"

The major problem in trying to understand or interpret the actions and motives of UFO intelligences is that we can look at the problem only from the human point of view. We can't think like ants or lizards, and we can't think like UFO aliens. It is no different from attempting to decipher the thought processes of any of the millions of different microbes that share our planet with us.

Trying to determine the aliens' intentions may be a waste of time. Whatever those intentions are, they may be totally incomprehensible from a human viewpoint.

At the same time, we cannot expect the aliens to think as human beings. Even though they may be able to talk to us and tell us all kinds of stories, it doesn't mean they're telling us the truth or anything useful. It's possible that they aren't seriously interested in us at all.

Some people believe UFO aliens are superior beings. They may be, but there's no reason why we should consider ourselves primitive. We are primitive only in our own minds. Mankind is not dumb. In spite of all the bad things we've done to each other over the centuries, we are amazing creatures who, despite appearances, care for each other and

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our planet, and we're beginning to reach out to other worlds.

Some researchers believe UFO sightings are an "internally generated psychic phenomenon," that witnesses simply create visions in their own minds. Debunkers say they're all the result of drunkenness, hallucinations, hoaxes or misinterpretations of normal phenomena — none of which explain the injuries, deaths, physical traces, radar tracks or mass sightings.[1]

Many people believe aliens are benevolent creatures who are concerned about us and have come to help us. With one possible exception, none of the witnesses I've talked to in Brazil would agree with that.

Some researchers and witnesses think the aliens have our best interests at heart, but the aliens may have no better understanding of us than we have of them. And our "best interests" may mean nothing to them.

A Control System?

Other researchers are convinced that a very public meeting with the aliens is imminent, whenever we are able to handle it. The theory is that each sighting and encounter is part of some slowly evolving plan by the extraterrestrials to bring our worlds together in the interest of cosmic harmony. However, the Brazilian victims I have met would undoubtedly agree that the aliens could best promote harmony by staying in their own worlds.

Other people believe UFOs are a control system, slowly conditioning us to accept not only their presence but also our admission into the cosmic community.[2] If the phenomenon is a control system, perhaps we are being conditioned for goals that are not good and beneficial, as we might hope. The human race has become more murderous than ever — wars in the twentieth century alone have killed between one hundred million and two hundred million people -- and we're

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now capable of destroying the world.

The aliens could be just as crazy as some of us are. The fact that they can get here from there doesn't mean they're particularly wise or bright. The vast majority of Earth people are intelligent, and there's no reason to believe aliens are any smarter. They may simply have been around a lot longer. What will we be capable of in a hundred or thousand years? Try a million.

There are a number of theories as to what UFOs are, where they come from and what they're doing here. Most people believe they're from other planets or stars. However, scientists tell us the nearest stars that may have inhabitable planets are too far away to reach unless you're moving at the speed of light. That's something like six hundred sixty nine million miles an hour, and even at that pace it would take years.

Parallel Universes

Some people believe UFOs are time travelers, coming here from the future or the past. I don't share that belief because I don't believe time is a physical dimension. That's always a dangerous thing to say, because once you do the nearest physicist will jump down your throat with both feet, not bothering to take his boots off. Too many of his equations and theories are based on time as a major component.[3]

To me, time is just a mental concept — and the greatest discovery anyone's ever made. It has enabled us to organize our lives, create civilized societies and complex technologies, play video games, drive cars that talk to you and make ships that can go to the moon. One day it will help us go to those worlds where UFO aliens come from and pester them for a while.

Finally, a growing number of researchers are coming to believe UFOs come from other dimensions. I do, too,
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although I prefer the term that many scientists use, parallel universes. Most physicists believe parallel universes may exist, and some believe they actually do exist, side by side by side with our universe, perhaps in infinite numbers.

If there are other universes, there must be stars and planets and life in them, just as we have in ours. (Once people get used to the idea of multiple universes, you'll hear them saying: "It would be pretty egotistical to think ours is the only universe with life in it.")

If other universes do exist, then it's possible that inhabitants of one or more of those universes have learned how to travel between universes. They come in craft that can counter the pull of our gravity, allowing them to hover silently and motionlessly, then zip out of sight in seconds. They can also pop in and out of our universe at will and maybe into any of several other universes.

This could explain why people see UFOs suddenly appear and just as suddenly disappear. It could also explain where UFOs go when they're through bothering people, because they simply seem to vanish rather than go park in a field for a while.

The aliens may just be coming through, passing on to some other universe perhaps, and there may be many different civilizations traveling through space all the time. We will just have to put up with it until we learn how to travel to other universes ourselves.

Parallel universes might clarify some abduction reports where people say they are taken to a strange land, a red city, for example, or a land with no sky. The victims might simply be taken into another universe and eventually returned to our own.[4]

Underground Base

One abduction witness in Puerto Rico told me he went

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aboard a disc-shaped UFO late one night after a small creature came to his house, knocked on the door and invited him to go with him. The man was neither curious nor afraid, and he voluntarily walked down the road with the creature to a UFO sitting in a field.

They entered, the UFO moved into the sky and a short distance away it simply went straight into a mountain, apparently just passing through the rock walls without difficulty. Inside was an enormous chamber, like a cavern, in which the man saw dozens if not hundreds of other UFOs of different sizes and many creatures similar to the one that had come to his house.

He was shown about for a long time and then was taken back home. If parallel universes exist, he may simply have been taken into another universe rather than "melting" through the walls of the mountain.

If residents of one parallel universe have learned how to move from one universe to another, then residents of a second and third or a dozen or more universes may have the same capabilities. This could explain the great variety of UFOs and the different behavior of various aliens, some helpful, some harmful, others indifferent.

A Universe Warp?

Parallel universes may also explain what happened in England in October, 1987, when two men saw a glowing object in the sky. It was hovering, looking at first like a shaft of light. Then it seemed to change shape, to a rugby ball, to a hemisphere, to a triangle and finally to a square. Then it slowly shrank into a red dot and disappeared.

Could it be that the object was in the midst of a "universe warp," partly here, partly there, partly elsewhere? Could it be that we can see into some adjoining universes but aren't aware of it?

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UFOs are tracked on radar, have broken tree limbs, left marks on the ground, and caused burns and other injuries. All of these would be possible when they're fully within our universe. But when they're seen passing through walls, when they're not tracked on radar even though pilots see them near their planes, when they appear and disappear like ghosts, and defy gravity, then they may be moving beyond our universe on their way home or somewhere else. They may even be visible to us in two or more adjoining universes before passing out of sight.

If this is actually happening, then the denizens of parallel universes probably have visited other worlds besides ours, and Earth's humans and animals could be just another batch of creatures that may or may not be interesting. But we must seem inferior or even greatly [inferior to them, something to observe or torment. Just as we study ants and find them fascinating, we'd never think of socializing with them.

Something Real That Isn’t

Parallel universes could also explain the silent explosions. In the Puerto Rican case, after the triangular object allegedly swallowed the two jet fighters, it came down low near the ground, exploded without a sound in a big shower of sparks, and then divided into two smaller objects with each disappearing in different directions. The explosion may have occurred a universe or two away, visible to the witnesses but with neither sound nor debris penetrating into our universe.

We're dealing with something real that isn't real. Parallel universes might explain that paradox. Parallel universes would also mean we're dealing with an "earthbound" phenomenon and nothing extraterrestrial. It's "here" all the time, and it isn't.

All this sounds absurd, but so is the phenomenon.

We should always be aware of the possibility that the

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UFO phenomenon, when its mystery is solved, will be of little or no importance, that it will have no significant impact on life.

To put the phenomenon into perspective, since its "discovery" in the 1940s, it has had little effect on the scheme of things. It may be potentially the biggest story of mankind, as most researchers believe, but as of now it can't be considered important compared with such terrible worldwide problems as poverty, hunger, racial, religious and ethnic hatred and warfare, gangster governments and the still-real threat of nuclear annihilation.

A Haphazard Phenomenon?

We have enough difficulty dealing with each other in this world of ours, and we certainly don't need more trouble from outsiders, regardless of where they're from. But these outsiders are here, or are coming here from time to time, and we have no choice but to deal with them. The people of this world have a right to know that intruders are in our midst and that some of them are harmful.

UFOs have not had any serious effect on the overall life of the people in this world. The witnesses are too scattered and too often are not influential members of their communities or nations. I don't believe witnesses are "chosen" by the phenomenon but simply are unfortunate to be at a place where and when a UFO appears. It|is, I suggest, a rather haphazard phenomenon. Although hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of people have had UFO sightings and encounters, relatively few had their lives changed profoundly by an experience.

The possibility always exists that the phenomenon will remain a mystery for thousands of years, to tantalize, taunt and terrify the generations to come. Or it could just disappear tomorrow, unsolved. However, there's no sign that it has gone away or even diminished. Sightings continue. The

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space travelers may well be around forever.

Even if UFOs do come from parallel universes, it doesn't explain why aliens have been on such a rampage in Brazil and virtually nowhere else. None of the several hundred interviews I've had with victims in Brazil have given me any clues.

At one time I thought that what's been happening could be likened to "wilding," the mindless violence that has taken hold in the United States and other countries in recent years. Wilding is a term describing what a gang of kids do when they brutally beat up an individual simply for the fun of it. But what they do is deliberate, and there's been no indication the UFO beings are deliberately hurting and killing people.

What seems more likely is that the UFO beings are simply insensitive to the harm they cause. That shouldn't be difficult to understand. Here on Earth, some scientists are accused of experimenting on animals without apparent regard for the pain and misery they inflict. The bad guys of Brazil's UFOs don't seem to be experimenting on people nor are they necessarily ganging up on people, but they're also not concerned about the fact that they're terrorizing, injuring and killing people.

Meanwhile, life goes on. In no way has the presence of UFOs halted normal life in Brazil. A few witnesses refuse to go outside at night for a while after an encounter, and entire communities may stay inside for a few weeks, but eventually everyone gets over their fears and goes on with living.

The only problem is that we don't know what lies ahead. The UFOs have not gone away. They're still very much here, not only in Brazil but in all countries in the world. And we don't know what is going to happen in the future. Will these bad guys of Brazil move on to other countries or will the "good guys" in other countries go bad?

The violence that has been taking place in Brazil may

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be the first faint wisps of smoke arising from a volcano that will one day explode.

1. One of the largest recorded mass sightings occurred in Puerto Rico in 1977. Approximately a thousand people watched two glowing balls of light drift slowly over the port city of Mayaguez and land in the ocean a mile offshore, where they bobbed for several hours, sometimes going beneath the surface and then coming back up. The police had a nightmare trying to unsnarl a massive traffic jam.
2. We're already part of the cosmic community, even though we aren't yet able to travel to other worlds.
3. A physicist once admitted to me that he thought a lot about time over the years and had come to believe it is a physical dimension, but he couldn't prove it. Another physicist, after figuratively stomping me into the rug, boomed: "Time is from the Big Bang to now!" I'm not sure what that meant either, but if he's correct, then there is no future, only the past.
4. Perhaps we move into other universes in our dreams. How many times have you dreamed about places you've never seen before in your life? And sometimes gone back to those same strange places in subsequent dreams? Maybe we even live in two or more parallel universes simultaneously. That could explain why one tennis player of my acquaintance frequently calls shots "out" when the rest of us see the ball land inside the court. Maybe his universe is half a second ahead of or behind ours and he's honestly calling the shots as he sees them.

Epilogue

THE CAPTURE OF TWO LIVE ETs

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The Brazilian military captured two live extraterrestrials in January 1996 and secretly sent them to the United States for study.

This revelation, which could have world-shaking consequences, was made by veteran UFO investigators Ubirajara Rodrigues, forty-two, and Vitorio Pacaccini, thirty-two, both intelligent, well-educated and very sane men. Their evidence seems quite strong.

They say the aliens were captured in Varginha, a medium-sized city about two hundred miles northwest of Rio de Janeiro, at a time when UFOs were being seen throughout Brazil in perhaps far greater numbers than ever before.[1]

Witnesses described the two creatures as humanoid, about three feet tall, with dark brown, hairless skin that was very oily, big triangular heads with three short "protuberances" on top and huge, red, vertically-oval eyes. They had long, thin arms and short, thin legs. They had no obvious noses or ears and only a slit for mouths. They were not wearing clothing, and no sex organs were visible. One had a small pot belly and very tough nails. Particularly striking is that they had unusually large veins growing out of their necks and running down their shoulders, arms, chests and backs, making them look like weightlifters.

"(Brazilian) Army Intelligence captured them, and the authorities are keeping it quiet," Pacaccini said when I visited Brazil two months after the incident. "There is no doubt about it. We have evidence that we can't reveal right now because people would go to jail. But we will continue our investigation until we have the proof we need."

Pacaccini and Rodrigues based their conclusions on interviews with more than half a dozen people who actually saw one or both creatures, and at least fifteen others who have second or third-hand knowledge of them.

It all began about three o'clock on the afternoon of

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January 20, 1996, as three young women were walking home in the Endare district of Varginha after helping a woman pack to move to another home.

"We decided to take a shortcut through a vacant lot," said Liliane Silva, sixteen, who was with her sister, Valquira, fourteen, and Katia Xavier, twenty-two. Katia is a maid for the woman who was moving, and the sisters are still in school.

The lot covers most of a city block and is filled with tall grass and weeds. On one side is an empty, cinderblock building. When they had walked about fifty feet into the lot, something caught Liliane's attention.

"Look at that!" she cried. What they saw about twenty feet away was a strange creature squatting down next to the cinderblock wall with its left side to the girls. Its left arm was between its legs and the right was next to the building. Its feet were hidden in the grass, and the girls never saw the hands or feet.

"It had oily, brown skin with big eyes and three horns on its head," Liliane was to say many times later to UFO investigators and news reporters. She and the other two said the creature was repulsive looking, but it was the huge, red eyes that disturbed them most.

All three stared at the creature for a stunned moment, then screamed. The creature turned its head and looked at them, seemed almost frightened and crouched a bit lower, perhaps trying to hide from them. The three immediately fled back to the street and didn't stop running until they reached the Silva home more than twenty blocks away.

Fifteen to twenty minutes later, after they'd calmed down, Katia and the girls' mother, Luiza, found someone to drive them back to the vacant lot. By then the creature was gone, but they found a round area of crushed grass where it had been and a smell like sulfur. Later that day a severe

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thunderstorm washed away any traces of the creature.

Enter UFO investigators Ubirajara Rodrigues and Vitorio Pacaccini.[2] Rodrigues heard about the girls' encounter a day or two later, and over the next few days repeatedly questioned them, going over and over their stories, having them retrace their steps through the lot and questioning their families, friends, and neighbors. The first few times he interrogated the three, they cried when they described the creature. Rodrigues had an artist make sketches based on their descriptions, and the girls were upset all over again when they saw the drawings. He was convinced they were telling the truth.

Two weeks later, he began hearing rumors that there had been not one but two creatures and both had been captured by the military. With his busy law practice, however, he couldn't devote as much time to the investigation as he wanted to. At this point, his longtime friend and fellow investigator, Pacaccini, began helping. Pacaccini's export-import business in Belo Horizonte, one hundred eighty miles to the north, allows him considerable flexibility, and he began to make more frequent trips to the family home in Tres Coracoes where his widowed mother and grandmother live.[3] It is fifteen miles from Varginha.

Fascinating information came tumbling in from various people, including two nurses who saw one of the creatures in a hospital and a man who helped capture one. Other sources recounted conversations they'd had with military personnel who had confided in them. This is the scenario that Rodrigues and Pacaccini pieced together:

What the three young women had encountered on Saturday afternoon January 20 was actually the second creature seen that day, and the first was captured around ten that morning just three blocks farther down the same hill. Involved in the capture were an army major and two

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sergeants as well as six military policemen who work as firemen.

In Brazil, the military police are not part of the nation's armed forces. They are state police under the control of a state's governor. They perform a variety of functions, such as highway patrolmen, riot police and rescue workers in floods and other disasters. They are also the nation's firemen, and one of their duties as such is capturing mad dogs, wild animals and dangerous snakes. It was in this capacity that four firemen answered a call on the morning of January 20 about a wild creature being seen on a hillside in the Endare district.

The four arrived in a fire truck, only to discover the three army men already there, standing near a large army truck. The army is a much more powerful authority in Brazil than the military police, and the firemen were unsure what they should do. They radioed their superior and asked him to come to the scene. He arrived some minutes later in a car with another fireman, conferred with the army major and then sent the first four firemen down the hill to capture the creature.

Earlier, the creature had been seen slowly shuffling down the steep embankment, which leads to a set of railroad tracks and a patch of woods beyond the tracks. Three kids had been throwing stones at it, and three adults were watching when the sergeants and major arrived and told them all to leave, saying it was a secret army operation.

By now the creature had disappeared into the woods. The four firemen proceeded to walk and slide down the embankment, cross the tracks, and go into the woods. They found the creature without difficulty and threw a net over it. It didn't resist and made only a slight buzzing sound with its lips. The firemen carried it back up the hill in the net without difficulty. It was put in a wooden box in the back of the army truck and covered with a canvas. No one said anything. The
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two sergeants then climbed into the back of the truck with the box, and the major drove to a large army base fifteen miles away in Tres Coracoes.

Rodrigues' and Pacaccini's informants said the second creature was captured in the same Varginha neighborhood about five or six o'clock that afternoon after Luiza Silva phoned the firemen and told them about the creature her daughters and Katia Xavier had seen. The wife of one fireman who helped capture it reportedly was so disturbed about his uniform being so oily from the creature that she burned it.

The second creature may have appeared ill. The firemen took it to a small, state-run health clinic and asked a doctor to come to the car to see if it was all right. The doctor took one look at it, instantly refused to help and insisted they take it away. Eventually they drove it to the regional hospital in Varginha.

The creature was placed in a hospital bed, and that section of the hospital was closed off. Later in the evening the two nurses, after hearing about the strange creature but ignoring warnings from colleagues that it was "very ugly," sneaked a look at it through a partially open door. It was alive and an oxygen mask covered its face.

Two army trucks loaded with soldiers, two jeeps and an ambulance were parked outside the hospital entrance for several hours late that night, but the soldiers, who were armed with rifles and bayonets, never left the trucks. Then, about one or two in the morning, the creature was taken to the army base in Tres Coracoes.

About four o'clock in the morning, a French-built Puma helicopter arrived from somewhere, landed on the base's polo field and left again before daybreak. The creatures were taken elsewhere, possibly to a base in Rio de Janeiro and then on to the United States. This information came from

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disgruntled military personnel who resented that something so important should be turned over to the Americans.

This is basically the story that Pacaccini related over a six-day period when I visited Varginha, Tres Coracoes and Belo Horizonte at the beginning of a three-week visit in March and April.

No UFO was seen in connection with the ETs, although at one-thirty the morning before, on January 19, a farmer and his wife six miles from Varginha woke up when they heard their cattle bellowing. Cattle thieves, they thought, and rushed outside to see the animals running up a hill—and just beyond the corral was a strange object the size of a small bus. It was moving silently a few feet above the ground. The farmer said it was a "gray submarine," and his wife said it was cigar-shaped. And the night before that, another couple had seen a green flash in the sky over Varginha.

This book was well into the production process when I decided to go to Brazil one more time. It had been three years since my last trip, and for all I knew, UFOs could have abandoned the country altogether. I wanted to know what, if anything, was going on.

When I arrived in Rio de Janeiro on March 21, I knew nothing of the capture of the two ETs. However, by coincidence I had planned to start my visit in Varginha, simply because Ubirajara Rodrigues had shared an abduction case with me in 1979, and I wanted to see him again. Further, I had worked with Pacaccini in 1991 and believed he was living in Tres Coracoes, so I had a double reason for going to that region.[4]

Cynthia Luce, with whom I had worked several times before, joined me once again. When we arrived at Pacaccini's home at noon on my second day in the country, he told us a television interview about the ET case had been arranged for later in the day. He asked me not to reveal the title of this

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book because he was afraid it would panic the people. I didn't want to be responsible for that happening, so I agreed.

Over the next few days, he told how he and Rodrigues had learned the details of the ETs' capture, but he didn't name their informants for fear they would be severely punished. He said at least four military men had already been jailed or put under house arrest in connection with the case, and at least three had nothing to do with the creatures.

A colonel at the army base curtly denied all reports that any creatures had been seen or captured. However, a construction worker helping build a house a block away from the capture site was quoted on TV as saying he had seen the army truck and fire truck that morning and that people had told him they'd seen the creature being captured. He soon came under severe pressure from the police not to say anything more, and shortly after he moved to another city two hours away.

The UFO investigators did learn the identity of one of the six people told by the army major to leave the scene that morning, but she adamantly refused to talk to them.

Rumors abounded. The more I heard, the more it sounded like nearly everyone involved kept their mouths shut--except to confide in close friends and relatives. I made no effort to find out who Rodrigues' and Pacaccini's sources were or to check them out, mainly because I didn't want to jeopardize the informants.[5] Besides, from what little I knew, it seemed to me that it wouldn't take Army Intelligence long to find out who was talking.

It also seemed that all Army Intelligence had to do was to continue denying anything happened, keep those involved quiet and eventually the public would lose interest. The story would die and with it one of ufology's best chances ever to prove UFOs come from other worlds.

I had many questions in my mind about the whole

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thing, and even wondered if Rodrigues and Pacaccini, or someone using them, were trying to hoax me. If so, I couldn't figure out why or how anyone would benefit. Besides, long before I arrived, at least two witnesses who had seen the creatures went on TV with their faces blanked out and their voices electronically altered to tell what they had seen.

On April 10, two days before leaving Brazil, I phoned Pacaccini one last time. He said he and Rodrigues had learned their phones were being tapped, and their cars had been followed. He also said that just two days earlier they had received startling information that explained everything, but he wouldn't discuss it over the phone.

In the meantime, UFO sightings were being reported virtually everywhere in the country, from the Amazon in the far northwest all the way down to the southernmost state, especially in March. Many reports came not only from Varginha and Tres Coracoes but also from other cities in southern Minas Gerais.

In my last two weeks in the country, Cynthia Luce and I talked to about thirty people who'd had sightings or encounters. Nineteen of the incidents had taken place between March 4 and April 6. Never before in my previous ten visits had I found so much current UFO activity.

Even more interesting is that we went to only four localities: (1) the Varginha-Tres Coracoes area, (2) Jequitiba in the Valley of the Old Women north of Belo Horizonte, (3) Conceicao do Mato Dentro, also in the Valley and farther northeast, and (4) Sao Jose do Vale do Rio Preto, where Cynthia lives in the neighboring state of Rio de Janeiro. The four areas are quite some distance from each other, and it is difficult to believe that we went to the only localities in Brazil where UFOs were being seen. It is more likely that what we found is a representative sample of what was happening all over the country, and instead of thirty witnesses, there could

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easily have been three thousand or even thirty thousand in March and April alone.

Besides the January 20 incident involving the three young women, and the one on January 19 when the farmer and his wife saw the "submarine" or cigar-shaped object, two other interesting sightings occurred in Varginha.

One took place late on the night of March 16, when a married couple and another man in their thirties saw a huge, red sphere in the same district where the girls had seen the creature. The top half of the sphere remained stationary while the bottom half—with three short, slender projections sticking out the sides-oscillated. The object was slowly moving about as if looking for something, and then it came back and stopped about a thousand feet over the couple's house. After several minutes it slowly drifted to the east, then suddenly disappeared at great speed.

The other sighting was even more spectacular. At eleven in the morning on April 2, a silver disc was seen moving through the sky. It came to a stop above a multinational company's plant where parts are made for autos. A short time later a second disc appeared, stopped directly above the first and then slowly settled down on top of it until they somehow merged, at which time the single unit floated around a bit and then zipped away at fast speed. Reportedly, fifty workers witnessed this.[6]

In the mountains around Jequitiba, a teenager on horseback was badly frightened when a red light followed him one evening in January, and he fled to a farmhouse.[7] In the same area late at night on March 15, a thirty-six-year-old farmer riding his horse home also got a bad scare when an intense, red light appeared in the sky about a hundred yards away. It was so bright he could hardly see. Then it began zigzagging and going up and down. He galloped away to the nearest farmhouse.

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A thirteen-year-old boy in the same area told us he and his family often see a revolving, red light circling above their farm and making a shhhh-ing sound.

In a five-year-old case, a butcher's car stopped of its own accord on a lonely dirt road near Jequitiba late one night when a huge light in the sky came toward it. The light was revolving and, as it got closer and closer, his car got hotter and hotter. He couldn't get the engine started. He got so scared he fired two shots with a revolver into the air, but it had no effect on the object. Eventually, it went away and the car started again.

One minor tragedy occurred in Jequitiba itself in September 1995. A power failure blacked out the city, and a fourteen-year-old boy went out to the sidewalk to take a look. Then he saw a round, lighted object in the sky nearby with a number of colored lights blinking on and off. It scared him, and he ran back into the darkened house—only to collide with his seventy-year-old grandmother and break her right leg. It had healed by the time we talked to her, but she said it was still sore.

Conceicao do Mato Dentro is fifty miles northwest of Jequitiba, but a mountain range lies in between, and driving there over the rugged, dirt roads takes three to four hours.[8]

At four-thirty in the morning on March 20, ten days before we arrived, a market owner, her husband and thirteen-year-old son were awakened by a beeping sound. Leaning out a window, they saw a big, red light about ten feet above the street a block away. It sat there beeping for a moment, then blinked out, and the sound stopped. An hour later the same sound was heard again, and again the light was seen in the same area. Then it vanished again.

Around ten in the evening on March 4, two revolving lights flashing red and yellow in unison were seen near the dirt road thirty miles east of Conceicao do Mato Dentro. The

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witnesses were a businesswoman and her son-in-law. Her shop makes articles for babies, and they were returning from a business trip to Belo Horizonte. The lights, about the size of beach balls, moved up and down in the sky until they disappeared.

In Taboleiro, a hamlet in the mountains six miles east of town, five men and women, all related, were fishing in a river about eleven o'clock one night around March 20.[9] They had a small fire going. A bright light came on in the sky about a hundred feet away. It then shined a beam of light down, moving it around as if inspecting the area. The big light, about sixty feet in the air, would stand still and then move and at times seemed to oscillate. After half an hour, the light simply turned off. At no time did the ray of light come near the five people nor did they ever hear anything.

Also in Taboleiro, we interviewed four people who had seen a huge light sitting above a cornfield near a farmhouse about four o'clock one morning in May 1986. It was so bright that the man who owned the farm shaded his eyes with his left arm. The arm was numb for a month after, he said. He also said he heard two voices but didn't understand the language. An electric wire leading to a neighbor's house was broken the same night, and the farmer believes the UFO broke it as it flew away from his house.

Around Sao Jose do Vale do Rio Preto, Cynthia Luce's home area more than two hundred and fifty miles to the south, UFOs were seen frequently in 1994 and 1995, and a flap was again under way during my visit.

Most of the current sightings involved strange lights, such as one seen March 17 on a farm next to Morro Grande, which at nearly three thousand feet is one of the highest mountains in the region. About seven that evening a seventeen-year-old youth saw a huge, yellowish light in the woods on a hill two hundred yards away. It lit up all the trees

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around it. Nearby are two pens holding a hundred and fifty pigs but the animals didn't react to the light. After four minutes it disappeared.

Two nights later, at five minutes after eleven, two teenage sisters and their aunt and uncle in a car saw a big ball of red light as they left the main highway and started up the dirt road leading to homes near Morro Grande. The light was revolving but soon disappeared toward Sao Jose. Five minutes later, one of the girls spotted the same red light or one like it. It was low in the sky straight ahead of them. It was sitting still and was revolving. Then the aunt spotted a second one, identical to the first, about twenty degrees to the left of the first one. Both stayed stationary for another minute or two. Then the one on the left flew directly toward the side of Morro Grande and simply vanished. Then the other one flew toward Morro Grande, turned sharply downward and also vanished into the face of the mountain.

About seven-thirty on the night of March 27, at least half a dozen eighth-graders standing on the porch of a night school nearby saw a big, red light fly slowly over the school toward the hill on the other side of the road, then turn around and pass back over the school. It made no noise.

Two nights later, at seven in the evening, the caretaker of a farm was sitting on his porch not far from where the other sightings occurred. Suddenly something like a huge headlight appeared just above banana trees to his left. To get a better look, he started walking down the hill toward the road. As he did, the light crossed directly in front of him for a short distance, then reversed direction, and-like the other two—vanished into the face of Morro Grande.

UFOs appear to be showing greater interest in Brazil than ever before, and the fascinating Varginha ET case indicated that some aliens may not be as invulnerable as once thought.

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None of the witnesses in the 1996 sightings that we talked to had been hurt or been victims of attempts to abduct them. Many said they weren't even frightened. But too many cases remain to be investigated before we can say whether the hostile UFOs have left. Still, the history of UFOs in Brazil shows they can be a threat to anyone anywhere. At the same time, it must be pointed out that, every day, most of us face a far greater threat of being hurt or killed in traffic or by criminals.

Bob Pratt, 26 April 1996

1. Varginha (Var-ZJEAN-yuh) is a city with several hundred thousand inhabitants, many of whom work for multi-national firms with offices or plants there. It is in a mountainous region of southern Minas Gerais, and the city spreads over a number of hills.
2. Ubirajara (Oo-bee-ruh-ZJAR-uh) Rodrigues is a successful lawyer in Varginha handling worker-compensation cases for companies and has been investigating UFOs for more than twenty years. He and his wife, Angelica, who teaches English, have two children. Vitorio Pacaccini (Pak-uh-CHEEN-nee) is an export-import broker in Belo Horizonte who arranges for worldwide shipment of products to and from Brazil in cargo containers. He also manages his family's three large coffee farms, is single and has been investigating UFOs for seventeen years. Most of the information for this account comes from Pacaccini, who has studied in the U.S. and speaks fluent English.
3. Trace Core-uh-Soysh.
4. By now he had moved back to Belo Horizonte but was making frequent trips to Tres Coracoes.
5. Although I did spend about an hour interviewing the three young women who had seen the one creature,

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and they seemed quite believable.

6. When this happened, we were far away in Conceicao do Mato Dentro, and this information came from Pacaccini.
7. Juh-KEETCH-ee-BAH.
8. Cone-say-SOW doo Mah-toe DANE-trow.
9. Tah-boo-LAY-rue.

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